



Mr. De Voltaire.



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THE
PHILOSOPHICAL
DICTIONARY:

OR, THE
OPINIONS
OF
MODERN PHILOSOPHERS
ON
METAPHYSICAL, MORAL,
AND
POLITICAL SUBJECTS.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

VOL. IV.

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THE

PHILOSOPHICAL

DICTIONARY:

OF THE

OF THE

MODERN PHILOSOPHERS

LECTURES

POLITICAL

IN THE

OF THE

LONDON

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PHILOSOPHICAL
DICTIONARY.

S.

IMMATERIALITY OF THE SOUL

IN meditating on the nature of man, we may discover two distinct principles; the one raising him to the study of eternal truths, and bearing him aloft to the regions of the intellectual world; the other debasing him even below himself, and subjecting him to the slavery of sense and the tyranny of the passions. From hence we may conclude, that man is not one simple and individual substance.

By the word substance is here meant, a being possessed of some primitive quality, abstracted from all particular and secondary modifications.

Now, if all known primitive qualities may be united in one and the same being, we have no need to admit of more than one substance; but if some of these qualities are incompatible with and necessarily exclusive of each other, we must admit of the existence of as many different substances as there are such incompatible qualities. Notwithstanding what Mr Locke hath said on this subject, we need only to know that matter is extended and divisible to be assured that it cannot think. Attraction is one of the laws of nature, the mystery of which may possibly be impenetrable; but we are at least capable of conceiving, that gravity, acting in the ratio of the quantity of matter, is neither incompatible with extension or divisibility. Can we conceive the same of thought and sentiment? The sensible parts are extended, but the sensitive being is single and indivisible; it is either entirely itself or nothing: The sensitive being therefore is not a body,

A mere machine is evidently incapable of thinking; it has neither motion nor figure productive of reflection: whereas, in man there exists something perpetually prone to expand, and to burst the fetters by which it is confined. Space itself affords not bounds to the human mind: the whole universe is not extensive enough for him: his sentiments, his desires, his anxieties, and even his pride, take rise from a principle different from that

that body within which he perceives himself confined.

No material being can be self-active, but man perceives himself self-active; and this sentiment carries with it a stronger conviction than any reason which can ever be brought against it. He hath a body on which other bodies act, and which act reciprocally on them. This reciprocal action is indubitable; but the will is independent of the senses. It can either consent to or resist their impressions; and we perceive clearly within ourselves when we act according to our wills, and when we submit to be governed by our passions.

If the soul be immaterial, it may survive the body. Were there no other proof of the immateriality of the soul than the oppression of the just and the triumph of the wicked in this world, that alone would be a sufficient proof of it. So shocking a discord amidst the general harmony of things would make us look out for the cause; and we should infer from thence, that we do not cease to exist with this life, but that every thing resumes its order after death. When the union of the body and soul is broken, it is conceivable that the one may be dissolved and the other preserved entire. Why should the dissolution of the one necessarily bring on that of the other? On the contrary, being so different in their natures, their state of union is a state of violence; and

when it is broken, they both return to their natural situation: the active and living substance regains all the force it had employed in giving motion to the passive and dead substance to which it had been united. The failings and infirmities of man make us sensible that man is but half alive, and that the life of the soul commences at the death of the body.

But what is that life? Is the soul immortal in its own nature? A limited comprehension is incapable of conceiving any thing that is unlimited. Whatever we call *infinite* is beyond human conception. We can neither deny nor affirm; we can employ no arguments on subjects we cannot conceive. Nothing is more probable than that the soul survives the body so long as is necessary to justify Providence in the good order of things; every rational man will adopt that as an article of faith; but who knows that the soul will survive the body for ever? We may readily conceive how material bodies wear away and are destroyed by the separation of their parts; but we cannot conceive a like dissolution of a thinking being: and hence, as we cannot imagine how it can die, we may presume it cannot die at all.

ROUSSEAU.

ON

MATERIALITY OF THE SOUL.

SOUL is an invented word, faintly and obscurely denoting the spring of human life. All animals have a motion, and this ability to move is called active force; but this force is no distinct being whatever. We have passions, memory, and reason: but these passions, this memory, and reason, are surely not separate things; they are not beings existing in us; they are not diminutive persons of a particular existence; they are generical words invented to fix our ideas. Thus the soul itself, which signifies our memory, our reason, our passions, is only a bare word. Whence then motion in nature? from God. Whence vegetation in the plant? from God. Whence motion in animals? from God. Whence cogitation in man? from God.—Were the human soul a diminutive person, inclosed within our body, to direct its motions and ideas, would not that betray in the eternal Maker of the world an impotence and an artifice quite unworthy of him? He then must have been incapable of making automata, which shall have the gift of motion and thought in themselves. When I learned Greek, I read Homer, where Vulcan appears to me an excellent smith; when he makes golden tripods going of themselves to the counsel of the gods; but

had this same Vulcan concealed within these tripods one of his boys, to make them move without being perceived, I should think him but a bungling cheat.—Wherefore should God put two springs to a work when one will do? That God can animate that so little known being which we call matter, must not be denied. Why then should he make use of another agent to animate it? Further, What may that soul be which you are pleased to give to our body? From whence did it come? When did it come? Must the Creator of the universe be continually watching the copulation of men and women? Closely observe the moment when a germ issues from a man's body, and passes into that of a woman, and then quickly inject a soul into this germ? And if this germ dies, what becomes of its soul? Either it must have been created ineffectually, or must wait another opportunity.

This is really a strange employment for the Sovereign of the universe. And it is not only in the copulation of the human species that he must be continually intent; but must observe the like vigilance and celerity with all animals whatever: for, like us, they have memory, ideas, and passions; and if a soul be necessary for the formation of these sentiments, these ideas, these passions, and this memory, God must be perpetually at work about souls for elephants and fleas, for
fish

fish and for bonzes.—What idea doth such a notion give of the Architect of so many millions of worlds, thus obliged to be continually making invisible props for perpetuating his work?

VOLTAIRE.

IMMATERIALITY OF THE SOUL.

IN every argument concerning material and immaterial substances, in which philosophers suppose our perceptions to inhere, no better method can be imagined than to ask those philosophers, *What they mean by substance and inhesion?*

This question can never be answered with regard to matter and body; and the mind labours under the same difficulties, and also is burdened with some additional ones which are peculiar to that subject. As every idea is derived from a precedent impression (*Vide* article ORIGIN OF IDEAS, by Hume), had we any idea of the substance of our minds, we must also have an impression of it; which is very difficult, if not impossible, to be conceived. For how can an impression represent a substance otherwise than by resembling it? And how can an impression resemble a substance, since, according to this philosophy, it is not a substance, and has none of the peculiar qualities or characteristics of a substance? Those philosophers who pretend that we have an
idea

idea of the substance of our minds, should point out the impression that produces it, and tell distinctly after what manner that impression operates, and from what object it is derived. Is it an impression of sensation or reflection? If it should be asserted that the definition of a substance is *something which may exist by itself*; this definition, it may be answered, agrees to every thing that can possibly be conceived, and never will serve to distinguish substance from accident, or the soul from its perceptions. Thus we may reason, Whatever is clearly conceived may exist; and whatever is clearly conceived, after any manner, may exist after the same manner. Again, every thing which is different is distinguishable, and every thing which is distinguishable is separable by the imagination. The conclusion from these principles is, that since all our perceptions are different from each other, and from every thing else in the universe, they are also distinct and separable, and may be considered as separately existent, and may exist separately, and have no need of any thing else to support their existence. They are, therefore, substances, as far as this definition explains a substance. Thus, neither by considering the origin of ideas, nor by means of a definition, are we able to arrive at a satisfactory notion of substance. We have no perfect idea of any thing but of a perception: A substance is entirely

tirely different from a perception: We have, therefore, no idea of a substance. Inhesion in something is supposed to be requisite to support the existence of our perceptions: Nothing appears requisite to support the existence of a perception: We have therefore no idea of inhesion. What possibility then of answering that question, *Whether perceptions inhere in a material or immaterial substance?* when we do not so much as understand the meaning of the question.

There is one argument commonly employed for the immateriality of the soul, which is remarkable: Whatever is extended, consists of parts; whatever consists of parts, is divisible, if not in reality, at least in imagination. But it is impossible any thing divisible can be conjoined to a thought or perception, which is a being altogether inseparable and indivisible. For, supposing such a conjunction, would the indivisible thought exist on the left or on the right of this extended divisible body; on the surface or the middle; on the back or fore-side of it? If it be conjoined with extension, it must exist somewhere within its limits. If it exist within its limits, it must either exist in one particular part; and then that particular is indivisible, and the perception is conjoined only with it, not with the extension: Or, if the thought exists in every part, it must also be extended, and separable and divisible as well as the body; which

which is utterly absurd and contradictory. For can any one conceive a passion of a yard in length, a foot in breadth, and an inch in thickness? Thought, therefore, and extension, are qualities wholly incompatible, and never incorporate together into one subject. This argument affects not the question concerning the *substance* of the soul, but only that concerning its *local conjunction* with matter; and therefore it may not be improper to consider in general what objects are or are not susceptible of a local conjunction. This is a curious question, and may lead us to some discoveries of considerable moment.—The first notion of space and extension is derived solely from the senses of sight and feeling; nor is there any thing but what is coloured or tangible that has parts disposed in such a manner as to convey that idea. When we diminish or increase a relish, it is not after the same manner that we diminish or increase a visible object; and when several sounds strike our hearing at once, custom and reflection alone make us form an idea of the degrees of the distance and contiguity of those bodies from which they are derived.—Whatever marks the place of its existence, either must be extended or must be a mathematical point without parts or composition. What is extended must have a particular figure, as square, round, triangular; none of which will agree to a desire

desire; or indeed to any impression or idea, except of those two senses above mentioned. Neither ought a desire, though indivisible, to be considered as a mathematical point: For in that case it would be possible, by the addition of others, to make two, three, or four desires, and these disposed and situated in such a manner as to have a determinate length, breadth, and thickness; which is absurd.

There is a maxim, *That an object may exist and yet be no where*. This is not only possible, but the greatest part of beings do and must exist after this manner. An object may be said to be no where, when its parts are not so situated with respect to each other as to form any figure or quantity; nor the whole with respect to other bodies, so as to answer to our notions of contiguity or distance. Now this is evidently the case with all our perceptions and objects, except those of the sight and feeling. A moral reflection cannot be placed on the right or on the left hand of a passion; nor can a smell or sound be either of a circular or square figure. These objects and perceptions, so far from requiring any particular place, are absolutely incompatible with it; and even the imagination cannot attribute it to them. And as to the absurdity of supposing them to be no where, we may consider, that if the passions and sentiments appear to the perception to have any particular

ticular place, the idea of extension might be derived from them, as well as from the sight and touch, contrary to what we have already established. If they *appear* not to have any particular place, they may possibly *exist* in the same manner, since whatever we conceive is possible.

It will not now be necessary to prove that those perceptions which are simple and exist no where, are incapable of any conjunction in place with matter or body, which is extended and divisible, since it is impossible to found a relation but on some common quality. See Hume's *Treatise of Human Nature*, Part 1. sec. 5. Vol. I. This question of the local conjunction of objects does not only occur in disputes concerning the nature of the soul, but in common life. Thus, supposing a fig at one end of the table and an olive at the other, it is evident, that in forming the complex ideas of these substances, one of the most obvious is that of their different relishes; and it is as evident that we conjoin these qualities with such as are coloured and tangible. The bitter taste of the one and sweet of the other, are supposed to lie in the very visible body, and to be separated from each other by the whole length of the table. This is so notable and so natural an allusion, that it may be proper to consider the principles from which it is derived.

Though an extended object be incapable of a

conjunction in place with another that exists without any place or extension, yet are they susceptible of many other relations. Thus, the taste and smell of any fruit are inseparable from its other qualities of colour and tangibility; and whichever of them be the cause or effect, it is certain they are always coexistent. Nor are they only coexistent in general, but also contemporary in the mind; and it is upon the application of the extended body to our senses we perceive its particular taste and smell. These relations, then, of *causation* and *contiguity* in the time of their appearance betwixt the extended object and the quality which exists without any particular place, must have such an effect on the mind, that upon the appearance of one it will immediately turn its thought to the conception of the other. Nor is this all. We not only turn our thought from one to the other upon account of their relation, but also endeavour to give them a new relation, viz. that of *conjunction in place*, that we may render the transition more easy and natural. But whatever confused notions we may form of an union in place betwixt an extended body, as a fig and its particular taste, it is certain, that, upon reflection, we must observe in this union something altogether unintelligible and contradictory. For should we ask ourselves one obvious question, viz. If the taste, which we conceive to be con-

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tained in the circumference of the body, is in every part of it, or in one only, we must quickly find ourselves at a loss, and perceive the impossibility of ever giving a satisfactory answer. We cannot reply, that it is only in one part; for experience convinces us that every part has the same relish. We can as little reply, that it exists in every part; for then we must suppose it figured and extended, which is absurd and incomprehensible. Here then we are influenced by two principles directly contrary to each other; viz. that *inclination* of our fancy, by which we are determined to incorporate the taste with the extended body; and our *reason*, which shows us the impossibility of such an union. Being divided between the opposite principles, we renounce neither one nor the other, but involve the subject in such confusion and obscurity that we no longer perceive the opposition. We suppose that the taste exists within the circumference of the body; but in such a manner that it fills the whole without extension, and exists entire in every part without separation. In short, we use that scholastic principle of *Totum in toto, et totum in qualibet parte; i. e.* "A thing is in a certain place, and yet it is not there."—All this absurdity arises from our endeavouring to bestow a place on what is utterly incapable of it; and that endeavour again arises from our inclination to complete an union

union which is founded on causation and a contiguity of time, by attributing to the objects a conjunction in place. But if ever reason be of sufficient force to overcome prejudice, it is certain that in the present case it must prevail: For we have only this choice left, either to suppose that some beings exist without any place, or that they are figured and extended; or that, when they are incorporated with extended objects, the whole is in the whole, and the whole in every part. The absurdity of the two last suppositions proves the truth of the first, nor is there any fourth opinion. For as to the supposition of their existence in the manner of mathematical points, it resolves itself into the second opinion; and supposes, that several passions may be placed in a circular figure; and that a certain number of smells, conjoined with a certain number of sounds, may make a body of twelve cubic inches; which is absurd.—But though, in this view of things, we cannot refuse to condemn the materialists, who conjoin all thought with extension; yet a little reflection will show us equal reason for blaming their antagonists, who conjoin all thought with a simple indivisible substance. The most vulgar philosophy informs us, that no external object can make itself known to the mind immediately, and without the interposition of an image or perception. That table which just now appears to

me is only a perception, and all its qualities are qualities of a perception. Now, the most obvious of all its qualities is extension. The perception consists of parts. These parts are so situated as to afford us the notion of distance and contiguity; of length, and breadth, and thickness. The termination of these three dimensions is what we call figure. This figure is moveable, separable, and divisible. Mobility and separability are the distinguishing properties of extended objects; and to cut short all disputes, the very idea of extension is copied from nothing but an impression, and must consequently perfectly agree to it. To say the idea of extension agrees to any thing, is to say it is extended.

The Freethinker may now triumph in his turn; and having found there are impressions and ideas really extended, may ask his antagonists, How they can incorporate a simple and indivisible subject with an extended perception? Is it in this particular part, or in that other? Is it in every part without being extended? Or is it entire in any one part without deserting the rest? It is impossible to give any answer to these questions, but what will both be absurd in itself, and will account for the union of our indivisible perceptions with an extended substance.

From these hypothesis concerning the *substance* and local conjunction of our perceptions, we may pass

pass to another, which is more intelligible than the former and more important than the latter, viz. concerning the *cause* of our perceptions. Matter and motion, as is commonly said in the schools, however varied, are still matter and motion, and produce only a difference in the position and situation of objects. Divide a body as often as you please, it is still body; place it in any figure, nothing ever results but figure or the relation of parts; move it in any manner, you will still find motion or a change of relation. It is absurd to imagine, that motion in a circle, for instance, should be nothing but merely motion in a circle; while motion in another direction, as in an ellipse, should also be a passion or moral reflection: That the shocking of too globular particles should become a sensation of pain, and that the meeting of two triangular ones should afford a pleasure. Now, as these different shocks and variations and mixtures are the only changes of which matter is susceptible, and as these never afford us any idea of thought or perception, it is concluded to be impossible that thought can ever be caused by matter. — Few have been able to withstand the seeming evidence of this argument; and yet it is easy to be refuted. We need only reflect that we are never sensible of any connection betwixt causes and effects, and that it is only by our experience of their constant conjunction we can arrive at any knowledge of this relation. Now, as all objects

which are not contrary, are susceptible of a constant conjunction, and as no real objects are contrary, we may infer, upon consideration of the matter *a priori*, from these principles, that any thing may produce any thing; and that we shall never discover a reason why any object may or may not be the cause of any other, however great or however little the resemblance may be betwixt them. This evidently destroys the precedent reasoning concerning the cause of thought and perception: For though there appears no manner of connexion betwixt motion or thought, the case is the same with all other causes and effects. Place one body of a pound weight on one end of a lever, and another body of the same weight on another end, you will never find in these bodies any principle of motion dependent on their distances from the centre more than of thought and perception. If you pretend, therefore, to prove *a priori*, that such a position of bodies can never cause thought, because turn it which way you will it is nothing but a position of bodies; you must, by the same course of reasoning, conclude, that it can never produce motion, since there is no more apparent connection in the one case than in the other. But as this latter conclusion is contrary to evident experience, and as it is possible we may have a like experience in the operations of the mind, and may perceive a constant conjunction

tion of thought and motion, you reason too hastily when, from the mere consideration of the ideas, you conclude, that it is impossible motion can ever produce thought, or a different position of parts give rise to a different passion or reflection. Nay, it is not only possible we may have such an experience, but it is certain we have it; since every one may perceive, that the different dispositions of the body change his thoughts and sentiments. And should it be said, that this depends on the union of soul and body, I would answer, that we must separate the question concerning the substance of the mind from that concerning the cause of its thought; and that, confining ourselves to the latter question, we find, by the comparing their ideas, that thought and motion are different from each other, and, by experience, that they are constantly united; which being all the circumstances that enter into the idea of cause and effect, when applied to the operations of matter, we may certainly conclude, that motion may be, and actually is, the cause of thought and perception.

There seems only this dilemma left us in the present case; either to assert that nothing can be the cause of another but where the mind can perceive the connection in its idea of the objects; or to maintain, that all objects which we find constantly conjoined, are upon that account to be regarded as causes and effects. If we choose the
first

first part of the dilemma, these are the consequences: First, we in reality affirm, that there is no such thing in the universe as a cause or productive principle, not even the Deity himself; since our idea of that Supreme Being is derived from particular impressions, none of which contain any efficacy, nor seem to have any connection with any other existence. As to what may be said, that the connection between the idea of an infinitely powerful being and that of any effect which he wills, is necessary and unavoidable, I answer, That we have no idea of a being endowed with any power, much less of one endowed with infinite power. But if we will change expressions, we can only define power by connection; and and then in saying that the idea of an infinitely powerful being is connected with that of every effect which he wills, we really do no more than assert, that a being whose volition is connected with every effect, is connected with every effect; which is an identical proposition, and gives us no insight into the nature of this power or connexion. But, secondly, supposing that the Deity were the great and efficacious principle which supplies the deficiency of all causes, this leads us into the grossest impieties and absurdities. For upon the same account that we have recourse to him in natural operations, and assert, that matter cannot of itself communicate motion or
pro-

produce thought, viz. because there is no apparent connection between these objects, I say, upon the very same account, we must acknowledge that the Deity is the author of all our volitions and perceptions; since they have no more apparent connection either with one another or with the supposed but unknown substance of the soul. If nothing be active, but what has an apparent power, thought is in no case any more active than matter; and if this inactivity must make us have recourse to a deity, the Supreme Being is the real cause of all our actions, bad as well as good, vicious as well as virtuous.—Thus we are necessarily reduced to the other side of the dilemma, viz. that all objects which are found to be constantly conjoined, are upon that account only to be regarded as causes and effects. Now, as all objects which are not contrary are susceptible of a constant conjunction, and as no real objects are contrary, it follows, that for ought we can determine by the mere ideas, any thing may be the cause or effect of any thing; which evidently gives the advantage to the materialists above their antagonists.—To pronounce, then, the final decision upon the whole. The question concerning the substance of the soul is absolutely unintelligible. All our perceptions are not susceptible of a local union either with what is extended or unextended; there being some of them
of

of the one kind and some of the other: And as the constant conjunction of objects constitutes the very essence of cause and effect, matter and motion may often be regarded as the causes of thought as far as we have any notion of that relation.

These arguments affect not the doctrine of the immortality of the soul. There is no foundation for any conclusion *a priori* either concerning the operations or duration of any object of which it is possible for the human mind to form any conception. Any object may be imagined to become entirely inactive, or to be annihilated in a moment; and it is an evident principle, *that whatever we can imagine is possible*. Now, this is no more true of matter than of spirit, of an extended compounded substance than of a simple and unextended. In both cases the metaphysical arguments for the immortality of the soul are equally inconclusive; and in both cases the moral arguments and those derived from the analogy of nature are equally strong and convincing.

HUME.

THE DOCTRINE OF THE IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL AMONG THE ANCIENT PHILOSOPHERS, BARBARIANS, AND JEWS.

THE writings of Cicero represent in the most lively colours the ignorance, the errors, and the un-

uncertainty of the ancient philosophers with regard to the immortality of the soul. When they are desirous of arming their disciples against the fear of death, they inculcate, as an obvious though melancholy position, that the fatal stroke of our dissolution releases us from the calamities of life; and those can no longer suffer who no longer exist. Yet there were a few sages of Rome who had conceived a more exalted, and in some respects a juster idea of human nature; though it must be confessed, that, in the sublime inquiry, their reason had been often guided by their imagination, and that their imagination had been prompted by their vanity. When they viewed with complacency the extent of their own mental powers; when they exercised the various faculties of memory, of fancy, and of judgment, in the most profound speculations, or the most important labours; and when they reflected on the desire of fame, which transported them into future ages, far beyond the bounds of death and the grave; they were unwilling to confound themselves with the beasts of the field, or to suppose that a being, for whose dignity they entertained the most sincere admiration, could be limited to a spot of earth and to a few years of duration.

With this favourable prepossession, they summoned to their aid the science, or rather the language, of metaphysics. They soon discovered, that as

none of the properties of body will apply to the operations of the mind, the human soul must consequently be a substance distinct from the body, pure, simple, and spiritual, incapable of dissolution, and susceptible of a much higher degree of virtue and happiness after the release from its corporeal prison. From these specious and noble principles, the philosophers who trod in the footsteps of Plato deduced a very unjustifiable conclusion; since they asserted not only the future immortality but the past eternity of the soul; which they were too apt to consider as a portion of the infinite and self-existing spirit which pervades and sustains the universe. A doctrine thus removed beyond the senses and experience of mankind, might serve to amuse the leisure of a philosophic mind; or, in the silence of solitude, it might sometimes impart a ray of comfort to desponding virtue; but the faint impression which had been received in the schools, was soon obliterated by the commerce and business of active life.

We are sufficiently acquainted with the eminent persons who flourished in the age of Cicero and of the first Cæsars, with their actions, their characters, and their motives, to be assured that their conduct in this life was never regulated by any serious conviction of the rewards or punishments of a future state. At the bar and in the senate of Rome, the ablest orators were not apprehensive of giving offence to

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their hearers, by exposing that doctrine as an idle and extravagant opinion, which was rejected with contempt by every man of a liberal education and understanding.—Since, therefore, the most sublime efforts of philosophy can extend no further than feebly to point out the desire, the hope, or at most the probability of a future state, there is nothing except a divine revelation that can ascertain the existence and describe the condition of the invisible country which is destined to receive the souls of men after their separation from the body.

But we may perceive several defects inherent to the popular religions of Greece and Rome, which rendered them very unequal to so arduous a task. 1. The general system of their mythology was unsupported by any solid proofs; and the wisest among the Pagans had already disclaimed its usurped authority. 2. The description of the infernal regions had been abandoned to the fancy of painters and poets; who peopled them with so many phantoms and monsters, who dispensed their rewards and punishments with so little equity, that a solemn truth, the most congenial to the human heart, was oppressed and disgraced by the absurd mixture of the wildest fictions. 3. The doctrine of a future state was scarcely considered among the devout polytheists of Greece and Rome as a fundamental article of faith. The providence of the gods, as it related

to public communities rather than to private individuals, was principally displayed on the visible theatre of the present world. The petitions which were offered on the altars of Jupiter and Apollo, expressed the anxiety of their worshippers for temporal happiness, and their ignorance and indifference concerning a future life. The important truth of the immortality of the soul was inculcated with more diligence as well as success in India, in Assyria, in Egypt, and in Gaul; and since we cannot attribute such a difference to the superior knowledge of the Barbarians, we must ascribe it to the influence of an established priesthood, which employed the motives of virtue as the instruments of ambition.

We might naturally expect, that a principle so essential to religion would have been revealed in the clearest terms to the chosen people of Palestine, and that it might safely have been entrusted to the hereditary priesthood of Aaron. It is incumbent on us to adore the mysterious dispensations of Providence, when we discover, that the doctrine of the immortality of the soul is omitted in the law of Moses; it is darkly insinuated by the prophets; and, during the long period which elapsed between the Egyptian and the Babylonian servitudes, the hopes as well as the fears of the Jews appear to have been confined within the narrow compass of the present life. After Cyrus had permitted the exiled nation

nation to return to the promised land, and after Ezra had restored the ancient records of their religion, two celebrated sects, the Sadducees and the Pharisees, insensibly arose at Jerusalem. The former, selected from the more opulent and distinguished ranks of society, were strictly attached to the literal sense of the Mosaic law; and they piously rejected the immortality of the soul as an opinion that received no countenance from the divine book which they revered as the only rule of their faith. To the authority of Scripture, the Pharisees added that of tradition; and they accepted, under the name of traditions, several speculative tenets from the philosophy or religion of the eastern nations. The doctrines of fate and predestination, of angels and spirits, and of a future state of rewards and punishments, were in the number of these new articles of belief; and as the Pharisees, by the austerity of their manners, had drawn into their party the body of the Jewish people, the immortality of the soul became the prevailing sentiment of the synagogue under the reign of the Asmonæan princes and pontiffs. The temper of the Jews was incapable of contenting itself with such a cold and languid assent as might satisfy the mind of a polytheist; and as soon as they admitted the idea of a future state, they embraced it with the zeal which has always formed the characteri-

stic of the nation. Their zeal, however, added nothing to its evidence, or even probability: and it was still necessary that the doctrine of life and immortality, which had been dictated by nature, approved by reason, and received by superstition, should obtain the sanction of divine truth from the authority and example of Christ.

GIBBON.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

BY the mere light of reason it seems difficult to prove the immortality of the soul; the arguments for it are commonly derived either from metaphysical topics, or moral, or physical. But in reality it is the gospel, and the gospel alone, that has brought *life and immortality to light*.

I. Metaphysical topics suppose that the soul is immaterial, and that it is impossible for thought to belong to a material substance. But just metaphysics teach us, that the notion of substance is wholly confused and imperfect; and that we have no other idea of any substance, than as an aggregate of particular qualities inhering in an unknown something. Matter, therefore, and spirit, are at bottom equally unknown; and we cannot determine what qualities inhere in the one or in the other. They likewise teach us, that nothing can be decided *a priori* concerning any
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cause or effect; and that experience, being the only source of our judgments of this nature, we cannot know from any other principle, whether matter, by its structure or arrangement, may not be the cause of thought. Abstract reasonings cannot decide any question of fact or existence. But admitting a spiritual substance to be dispersed throughout the universe, like the ethereal fire of the Stoics, and to be the only inherent subject of thought, we have reason to conclude from *analogy*, that nature uses it after the manner she does the other substance, *matter*. She employs it as a kind of paste or clay; modifies it into a variety of forms and existences; dissolves after a time each modification, and from its substance erects a new form. As the same material substance may successively compose the bodies of all animals, the same spiritual substance may compose their minds: Their consciousness, or that system of thought which they formed during life, may be continually dissolved by death, and nothing interests them in the new modification. The most positive assertors of the mortality of the soul never denied the immortality of its substance; and that an immaterial substance, as well as a material, may lose its memory or consciousness, appears in part from experience, if the soul be immaterial. Reasoning from the common course of nature, and without supposing any new interposition of the Supreme Cause,

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Cause, which ought always to be excluded from philosophy, *what is incorruptible must also be ingenerable.* The soul therefore, if immortal, existed before our birth; and if the former existence no ways concerned us, neither will the latter. Animals undoubtedly feel, think, love, hate, will; and even reason, though in a more imperfect manner than men: Are their souls also immaterial and immortal?

II. Let us now consider the moral arguments, chiefly those derived from the justice of God, which is supposed to be further interested in the future punishment of the vicious and reward of the virtuous.—But these arguments are grounded on the supposition that God has attributes beyond what he has exerted in this universe, with which alone we are acquainted. Whence do we infer the existence of these attributes? It is very safe for us to affirm, that whatever we know the Deity to have actually done is best; but it is very dangerous to affirm, that he must always do what to us seems best. In how many instances would this reasoning fail us with regard to the present world?—But if any purpose of nature be clear, we may affirm, that the whole scope and intention of man's creation, so far as we can judge by natural reason, is limited to the present life. With how weak a concern from the original inherent structure of the mind and passions, does he
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ever look further? What comparison either for steadiness or efficacy, betwixt so floating an idea and the most doubtful persuasion of any matter of fact that occurs in common life? There arise indeed in some minds some unaccountable terrors with regard to futurity; but these would quickly vanish were they not artificially fostered by precept and education. And those who foster them, what is their motive? Only to gain a livelihood, and to acquire power and riches in this world. Their very zeal and industry, therefore, are an argument against them.

What cruelty, what iniquity, what injustice in nature, to confine all our concern, as well as all our knowledge, to the present life, if there be another scene still waiting us of infinitely greater consequence? Ought this barbarous deceit to be ascribed to a beneficent and wise Being?—Observe with what exact proportion the task to be performed and the performing powers are adjusted throughout all nature. If the reason of man gives him great superiority above other animals, his necessities are proportionably multiplied upon him: his whole time, his whole capacity, activity, courage, and passion, find sufficient employment in fencing against the miseries of his present condition; and frequently, nay, almost always, are too slender for the business assigned them.—A pair of shoes, perhaps, was never yet wrought to the

the highest degree of perfection which that commodity is capable of attaining; yet it is necessary, at least very useful, that there should be some politicians and moralists; even some geometers, poets, and philosophers among mankind. The powers of men are no more superior to their wants, considered merely in this life, than those of foxes and hares are, compared to *their* wants and to their period of existence. The inference from parity of reason is therefore obvious.

On the theory of the soul's mortality, the inferiority of women's capacity is easily accounted for. Their domestic life requires no higher faculties either of mind or body. This circumstance vanishes and becomes absolutely insignificant on the religious theory: The one sex has an equal task to perform as the other; their powers of reason and resolution ought also to have been equal, and both of them infinitely greater than at present. As every effect implies a cause, and that another, till we reach the first cause of all, which is the Deity; every thing that happens is ordained by him, and nothing can be the object of his punishment or vengeance.—By what rule are punishments and rewards distributed? What is the divine standard of merit and demerit? Shall we suppose that human sentiments have place in the Deity? How bold that hypothesis! We have no conception of any other sentiments.—According
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ing to human sentiments, sense, courage, good manners, industry, prudence, genius, &c. are essential parts of personal merits. Shall we therefore erect an elysium for poets and heroes like that of the ancient mythology? Why confine all rewards to one species of virtue? Punishment, without any proper end or purpose, is inconsistent with *our* ideas of goodness and justice; and no end can be served by it after the whole scene is closed. Punishment, according to *our* conception, should bear some proportion to the offence. Why then eternal punishment for the temporary offences of so frail a creature as man? Can any one approve of Alexander's rage, who intended to exterminate a whole nation because they had seized his favourite horse Bucephalus?

Heaven and hell suppose two distinct species of men, the good and the bad; but the greatest part of mankind float betwixt vice and virtue.— Were one to go round the world with an intention of giving a good supper to the righteous and a sound drubbing to the wicked, he would frequently be embarrassed in his choice, and would find that the merits and the demerits of most men and women scarcely amount to the value of either. To suppose measures of approbation and blame different from the human confounds every thing. Whence do we learn that there is such a thing as moral distinctions, but from our own senti-

sentiments?—What man who has not met with personal provocation (or what good-natured man who has) could inflict on crimes, from the sense of blame alone, even the common, legal, frivolous punishments? And does any thing steel the breast of judges and juries against the sentiments of humanity but reflection on necessity and public interest? By the Roman law, those who had been guilty of parricide, and confessed their crime, were put into a sack along with an ape, a dog, and a serpent, and thrown into the river. Death alone was the punishment of those who denied their guilt, however fully proved. A criminal was tried before Augustus, and condemned after a full conviction; but the humane emperor, when he put the last interrogatory, gave it such a turn as to lead the wretch into a denial of his guilt. “You surely (said the prince) did not “kill your father?” This lenity suits our natural ideas of *right* even towards the greatest of all criminals, and even though it prevents so inconsiderable a sufferance. Nay, even the most bigotted priest would naturally without reflection approve of it, provided the crime was not heresy or infidelity; for as these crimes hurt himself in his *temporal* interest and advantages, perhaps he may not be altogether so indulgent to them. The chief source of moral ideas is the reflection on the interests of human society. Ought these interests,

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so short, so frivolous, to be guarded by punishment eternal and infinite? The damnation of one man is an infinitely greater evil in the universe than the subversion of a thousand millions of kingdoms. Nature has rendered human infancy peculiarly frail and mortal, as it were on purpose to refute the notion of a probationary state; the half of mankind die before they are rational creatures.

III. The physical arguments from the analogy of nature are strong for the mortality of the soul; and are really the only philosophical arguments which ought to be admitted with regard to this question, or indeed any question of fact.—Where any two objects are so closely connected that all alterations which we have ever seen in the one are attended with proportionable alterations in the other; we ought to conclude, by all rules of analogy, that, when there are still greater alterations produced in the former, and it is totally dissolved, there follows a total dissolution of the latter. Sleep, a very small effect on the body, is attended with a temporary extinction, at least a great confusion in the soul. The weakness of the body and that of the mind in infancy are exactly proportioned; their vigour in manhood, their sympathetic disorder in sickness, their common gradual decay in old age. The step further seems unavoidable; their common dissolution in death.

death. The last symptoms which the mind discovers, are disorder, weakness, insensibility, and stupidity; the forerunners of its annihilation. The further progress of the same causes encreasing, the same effects totally extinguish it. Judging by the usual analogy of nature, no form can continue when transferred to a condition of life very different from the original one in which it was placed. Trees perish in the water, fishes in the air, animals in the earth. Even so small a difference as that of climate is often fatal. What reason then to imagine, that an immense alteration, such as is made on the soul by the dissolution of its body, and all its organs of thought and sensation, can be effected without the dissolution of the whole? Every thing is in common betwixt soul and body. The organs of the one are all of them the organs of the other; the existence, therefore, of the one must be dependent on that of the other. The souls of animals are allowed to be mortal; and these bear so near a resemblance to the souls of men, that the analogy from one to the other forms a very strong argument. Their bodies are not more resembling, yet no one rejects the argument drawn from comparative anatomy. The Metempsychosis is therefore the only system of this kind that philosophy can hearken to.

Nothing in this world is perpetual; every thing,
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however seemingly firm, is in continual flux and change: The world itself gives symptoms of frailty and dissolution. How contrary to analogy, therefore, to imagine that one single form, seemingly the frailest of any, and subject to the greatest disorders, is immortal and indissoluble? What daring theory is that! how lightly, not to say how rashly, entertained! How to dispose of the infinite number of posthumous existences ought also to embarrass the religious theory. Every planet in every solar system we are at liberty to imagine peopled with intelligent mortal beings, at least we can fix on no other supposition. For these then a new universe must every generation be created beyond the bounds of the present universe, or one must have been created at first so prodigiously wide as to admit of this continual influx of beings. Ought such bold suppositions to be received by any philosophy, and that merely on the pretext of a bare possibility? When it is asked, Whether Agamemnon, Therſites, Hannibal, Varro, and every stupid clown that ever existed in Italy, Scythia, Bactria, or Guinea, are now alive; can any man think, that a scrutiny of nature will furnish arguments strong enough to answer so strange a question in the affirmative? The want of argument without revelation sufficiently establishes the negative.—*Quanto facilius,* says Pliny, *certiusque sibi quemque credere, ac specimen securitatis antigene tali sumere exemplo.*

VOL. IV. E † mento.

menta. Our insensibility before the composition of the body seems to natural reason a proof of a like state after dissolution.—Were our horrors of annihilation an original passion, not the effect of our general love of happiness, it would rather prove the mortality of the soul: For as nature does nothing in vain, she would never give us a horror against an impossible event. She may give us a horror against an unavoidable event, provided our endeavours, as in the present case, may often remove it to some distance. Death is in the end unavoidable; yet the human species could not be preserved had not nature inspired us with an aversion towards it. All doctrines are to be suspected which are favoured by our passions; and the hopes and fears which gave rise to this doctrine are very obvious.

It is an infinite advantage in every controversy to defend the negative. If the question be out of the common experienced course of nature, this circumstance is almost if not altogether decisive. By what arguments or analogies can we prove any state of existence, which no one ever saw, and which no way resembles any that ever was seen? Who will repose such trust in any pretended philosophy as to admit upon its testimony the reality of so marvellous a scene? Some new species of logic is requisite for that purpose, and some new faculties of the mind, that may enable us to comprehend that logic.

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Nothing could set in a fuller light the infinite obligations which mankind have to divine revelation, since we find that no other medium could ascertain this great and important truth.

HUME.

THE SOUL THINKS NOT ALWAYS.

WE know certainly by experience that we sometimes think; and thence draw this infallible consequence, that there is something in us that has a power to think: But whether that substance perpetually thinks or no, we can be no further assured than experience informs us. For to say that actual thinking is essential to the soul, and inseparable from it, is to beg what is in question, and not to prove it by reason; which is necessary to be done if it be not a self-evident proposition. But whether this, *that the soul always thinks*, be a self-evident proposition that every body assents to at first hearing, I appeal to mankind. It is doubted whether I thought all last night or not. The question being about a matter of fact, it is begging it to bring as a proof of it an hypothesis, which is the very thing in dispute; by which way one may prove any thing: and it is but supposing that all watches, whilst the balance beats, think; and it is sufficiently proved, and past doubt, that that my watch thought all last night.

I grant that the soul in a waking man is never

without thought, because it is the condition of being awake: But whether sleeping without dreaming be not an affection of the whole man, mind as well as body, may be worth a waking man's consideration; it being hard to conceive that any thing should think and not be conscious of it. If the *soul doth think in a sleeping man* without being conscious of it, I ask, Whether, during such thinking, it has any pleasure or pain, or be capable of either happiness or misery? I am sure the man is not, no more than the bed or earth he lies on. For to be happy or miserable without being conscious of it, seems to me utterly inconsistent and impossible: Or if it be possible that the soul can, while the body is sleeping, have its thinking, enjoyments and concerns, its pleasure or pain, apart, which the man is not conscious of, nor partakes in; it is certain, that Socrates asleep and Socrates awake is not the same person; but his soul when he sleeps, and Socrates the man consisting of body and soul when he is waking, are two persons; since waking Socrates has no knowledge of, or concernment for, that happiness or misery of his soul which it enjoys alone by itself whilst he sleeps, without perceiving any thing of it, no more than he has for the happiness or misery of a man in the Indies whom he knows not. For if we take wholly away all consciousness of our actions and sensations, especially of pleasure or pain, and the concernment that accompanies it,
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it will be hard to know wherein to place personal identity.

Whilst the soul thinks and perceives, it is capable certainly of those of delight or trouble as well as any other perceptions; and *it must necessarily be conscious of its own perceptions*. But it has all this apart. The sleeping man, it is plain, is conscious of nothing of all this. Let us suppose, then, the soul of Castor, whilst he is sleeping, retired from his body, and to think apart: Let us suppose, too, that it chooses for its scene of thinking the body of another man, *v. g.* Pollux, who is sleeping without a soul; for if Castor's soul can think whilst Castor is asleep what Castor is never conscious of, it is no matter what place it chooses to think in. We have here, then, the bodies of two men with only one soul between them, which we will suppose to sleep and wake by turns, and the soul still thinking in the waking man, whereof the sleeping man is never conscious, has never the least perception: I ask, then, Whether Castor and Pollux, thus with only one soul between them, which thinks and perceives in one what the other is never conscious of, nor concerned for, are not two as distinct persons as Castor and Hercules, or as Socrates and Plato were? And whether one of them might not be very happy and the other very miserable? Just by the same reason they make the soul and

the man two persons, who make the soul think apart what the man is not conscious of. For I suppose nobody will make identity of persons to consist in the soul's being united to the very same numerical particles of matter: For if that be necessary to identity, it will be impossible, in that constant flux of the particles of our bodies, that any man should be the same person two days or two moments together.

That the soul in a sleeping man should be this moment busy in thinking, and the next moment in a waking man not remember nor be able to recollect one jot of all those thoughts, is very hard to be conceived. For who can imagine that the greatest part of men do, during all their lives, for several hours every day, think of something, which if they were asked, even in the middle of these thoughts, they could remember nothing at all of? Every one's acquaintance will furnish him with examples enough of such as pass most of their nights without dreaming.

To think often, and never to retain it so much as one moment, is a very useless sort of thinking: And the soul in such a state of thinking does very little, if at all, excel that of a looking-glass, which constantly receives variety of images or ideas, but retains none; they disappear and vanish, and there remain no footsteps of them: The looking-glass is never the better for such ideas,
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nor the soul for such thoughts. Perhaps it will be said, that in a waking man the materials of the body are employed and made use of in thinking; and that the memory of thoughts is retained by the impressions that are made on the brain, and the traces there left after such thinking: but that in the *thinking of the soul*, which is not perceived in a *sleeping man*, there the soul thinks apart; and, making no use of the organs of the body, leaves no impressions on it, and consequently no memory, of such thoughts. Not to mention again the absurdity of two distinct persons, which follows from this supposition, I answer further, that whatever ideas the mind can receive and contemplate without the help of the body, it is reasonable to conclude it can retain without the help of the body too, or else the soul or any separate spirit will have but little advantage by thinking. If it has no memory of its own thoughts; if it cannot lay them up for its use, and be able to recal them upon occasion; if it cannot reflect upon what is past, and make use of its former experiences, reasonings, and contemplations; to what purpose does it think? They who make the soul a thinking thing, at this rate will not make it a much more noble being than those do whom they condemn for allowing it to be nothing but the subtlest parts of matter. Characters drawn on dust, that the first breath of wind effaces, or impressions

sions made on a heap of atoms or animal spirits, are altogether as useful, and render the subject as noble, as the thoughts of a soul that perish in thinking; that once out of sight are gone for ever, and leave no memory of themselves behind them. Nature never makes excellent things for mean or no uses: And it is hardly to be conceived, that our infinite wise Creator should make so admirable a faculty as the power of thinking, that faculty which comes nearest the excellency of his own incomprehensible being, to be so idly and uselessly employed at least one fourth part of its time here, as to think constantly without remembering any of those thoughts, without doing any good to itself or others, or being any way useful to any other part of the creation.

It is true, we have some instances of perception whilst we are *asleep*, and retain the memory of those *thoughts*: But how extravagant and incoherent for the most part they are, how little conformable to the perception and order of a rational being, those who are acquainted with dreams need not be told. This I would willingly be satisfied in, Whether the soul, when it thinks thus apart, and as it were separate from the body, acts less rationally than when conjointly with it or no? If its separate thoughts be less rational, then the soul owes the perfection of rational thinking to the body; if it does not, it is a wonder that
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that our dreams should be for the most part so frivolous and irrational, and that the soul should retain none of its more rational soliloquies and meditations.

The *dreams* of sleeping men *are all made up of the waking man's ideas*, though for the most part oddly put together. It is strange, if the soul has ideas of its own that it derived not from sensation or reflection (as it must have if it thought before it received any impression from the body), that it should never in its private thinking (so private that the man himself perceives it not) retain any of them the very moment it awakes out of them, and then make the man glad with new discoveries. Who can find it reasonable, that the soul should, in its retirement during sleep, have so many hours thoughts, and yet never light on any of those ideas it borrowed not from sensation or reflection; or at least preserve the memory of none but such, which being occasioned by the body, must needs be less natural to a spirit? It is strange the soul should never once in a man's whole life recall over any of its pure native thoughts, and those ideas it had before it borrowed any thing from the body; never bring into the waking man's view any other ideas but what have a tang of the cask, and manifestly derive their original from that union. If it always thinks, and so had ideas before it was united, or before it received any
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from the body, it is not to be supposed but that, during sleep, it recollects its native ideas; and during that retirement from communicating with the body whilst it thinks by itself, the ideas it is busied about should be, sometimes at least, those more natural and congenial ones which it had in itself, underived from the body or its own operations about them: Which since the waking man never remembers, we must from this hypothesis conclude, either that the soul remembers something that the man does not, or else that memory belongs only to such ideas as are derived from the body, or the mind's operations about them.

But how do men come to know that they themselves think when they themselves do not perceive it? To know without perceiving is a confused notion, taken up to serve an hypothesis; and none of those clear truths, that either their own evidence forces us to admit, or common experience makes it impudence to deny: For the most that can be said of it is, that it is possible the soul may always think, but not always retain it in memory. And it is as possible that the soul may not always think, and much more probable that it should sometimes not think, than it should often think, and that a long while together, and not be conscious to itself the next moment that it had thought.

They who tell us that the soul always thinks, do never say that a man always thinks. Can the
soul

soul think, and not the man? or a man think, and not be conscious of it? If they say, the man thinks always, but is not always conscious of it; they may as well say, his body is extended without parts, as that any thing *thinks without being conscious of it*, or perceiving that it does so. They may as well assert, that a man is always hungry, but that he does not always feel it; whereas hunger consists in that very sensation, as thinking consists in being conscious to himself of thinking. I ask how they know it? Consciousness is the perception of what passes in a man's own mind. Can another man perceive that I am conscious of any thing when I perceive it not of myself? No man's knowledge here can go beyond his experience. Wake a man out of a sound sleep, and ask him what he was that moment thinking on? If he himself be conscious of nothing he thought on, he must be a notable diviner of thoughts that can assure him that he was thinking: May he not with more reason assure him he was not asleep? This is something beyond philosophy; and it cannot be less than revelation that discovers to another thoughts in my mind, when I can find none there myself; and they must needs have a penetrating sight, who can certainly see that I think when I cannot perceive it myself, and when I declare that I do not; and yet can see that dogs and elephants do not think, when

when they give all the demonstration of it imaginable, except only telling us that they do so. This some may suspect to be a step beyond the Rosicrucians; it seeming easier to make one's self invifible to others, than to make another's thoughts vifible to me which are not vifible to himself. But it is but defining the foul to be a fubftance that always thinks, and the buſineſs is done. If ſuch definition be of any authority, I know not what it can ſerve for, but to make men ſuſpect that they have no fouls at all, ſince they find a good part of their lives paſs away without thinking: For no definitions that I know, no ſuppoſitions of any ſect, are of force enough to deſtroy conſtant experience; and perhaps it is the affectation of knowing beyond what we perceive that makes ſo much uſeleſs diſpute and noiſe in the world. LOCKE.

THE EXISTENCE OF SPIRITS KNOWABLE.

THE having the ideas of ſpirits does not make us know that any ſuch things do exiſt without us; or that there are any finite ſpirits, or any other ſpiritual beings but the eternal God. We have ground from revelation, and ſeveral other reaſons, to believe with aſſurance that there are ſuch creatures; but our ſenſes not being able to diſcover them, we want the means of knowing their

their particular existences. For we can no more know that there are finite spirits really existing by the idea we have of such beings in our minds, than by the ideas any one has of fairies or centaurs he can come to know that things answering those ideas do really exist: And therefore concerning the existence of finite spirits, as well as several other things, we must content ourselves with the evidence of faith; but universal certain propositions concerning this matter are beyond our reach. For however true it may be, *v. g.* that all the intelligent spirits that God ever created do still exist, yet it can never make a part of our certain knowledge. These and the like propositions we may assent to as highly probable; but are not, I fear, in this state capable of knowing. We are then not to put others upon demonstrating, nor ourselves upon search, of universal certainty, in all those matters wherein we are not capable of any other knowledge but what our senses give us in this or that particular.

LOCKE.

S U B S T A N C E.

THE word *substance*, according to its etymology, signifies somewhat which stands under or supports something; and therefore the philosophers define it as a being subsisting of itself. The

idea of a being is the most general and abstracted idea we can form; And *being* by philosophers is divided into substance and the qualities of substance, which they call accidents or modes. By these modes *alone* we have ideas conveyed to our minds of any objects whatsoever: but as it is impossible they should exist without substance to support them, we are as sure of the existence of substance as modes; but what this substance is, we can never determine. We see but the outside and actions of substance; but what the essence of it is, we know not. We find in ourselves reason, love, hope, and other mental powers; but are we not quite ignorant of the substance in which these powers reside? The pen I am now writing with hath many constituent parts; the barrel, the pith, the plumage, all of different qualities and consistence: But are these several parts of the same or of a different substance? Sir Isaac Newton hath offered it as a conjecture, that all the original constituent particles of matter *may* be of the same substance, and even of the same form; and that the vast variety we see in the world may arise from the different combinations and motions of these original particles. But even supposing this were proved, which is far from being the case, we are still at as great a loss as ever: For who could yet say what is the substance of these par-

particles? We have no principles to go upon in an inquiry after a solution of that question.

It was the opinion of Spinoza, that there is but one substance in the universe; that it hath existed always, and will exist for ever; and that the vast variety of beings in it are only different modifications of this substance: And this ^{to} or one substance he calleth *God*. This scheme of his, though supported with great subtilty and wit, is really so full of absurdities, that it is now most justly exploded. But he is thought to have taken it up from the abstruse and endless disputes which have been carried on in the world for very many centuries, whether the Son of God be of the same substance with the Father. For he is supposed to argue thus with himself: If, according to the prevailing hypothesis, two distinct intelligent beings can be of one and the same substance, why may not three? if three, why may not four? if four, why may not four thousand? and so on any number *ad infinitum*? What absurd disputes have been carried on amongst philosophers and Christians of all sects and denominations, concerning subjects which all acknowledge at the same time to be inexplicable! And *that* concerning substance is surely one of these.

ROBERTSON.

SUICIDE.

ONE considerable advantage that arises from Philosophy consists in the sovereign antidote which it affords to superstition and false religion. All other remedies against that pestilent distemper are vain, or at least uncertain. Plain good sense, and the practice of the world, which alone serve most purposes of life, are here found ineffectual. History as well as daily experience furnish instances of men endowed with the strongest capacity for business and affairs, who have all their lives crouched under slavery to the grossest superstition. Even gaiety and sweetness of temper, which infuse a balm into every other wound, afford no remedy to so virulent a poison; as we may particularly observe of the fair sex, who, though commonly possessed of these rich presents of nature, feel many of their joys blasted by this importunate intruder. But when sound Philosophy has once gained possession of the mind, superstition is effectually excluded; and one may fairly affirm that her triumph over this enemy is more complete than over most of the vices and imperfections incident to human nature. Love or anger, ambition or avarice, have their root in the temper and affections, which the soundest reason is scarce ever able fully to correct; but superstition being found-
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ed on false opinion, must immediately vanish when true philosophy has inspired juster sentiments of superior powers. The contest is here more equal between the distemper and the medicine; and nothing can hinder the latter from proving effectual but its being false and sophisticated.

It will here be superfluous to magnify the merits of Philosophy by displaying the pernicious tendency of that vice of which it cures the human mind. The superstitious man, says Tully, is miserable in every scene, in every incident in life; even sleep itself, which banishes all other cares of unhappy mortals, affords to him matter of new terror; while he examines his dreams, and finds in those visions of the night prognostications of future calamities. I may add, that though death alone can put a full period to his misery, he dares not fly to this refuge, but still prolongs a miserable existence, from a vain fear lest he offend his Maker, by using the power with which that beneficent Being has endowed him. The presents of GOD and nature are ravished from us by this cruel enemy; and notwithstanding that one step would remove us from the regions of pain and sorrow, her menaces still chain us down to a hated being, which she herself chiefly contributes to render miserable.

It is observed by such as have been reduced by the calamities of life to the necessity of employing

this fatal remedy, that if the unseasonable care of their friends deprive them of that species of death which they proposed to themselves, they seldom venture upon any other, or can summon up so much resolution a second time as to execute their purpose. So great is our horror of death, that when it presents itself under any form besides that to which a man has endeavoured to reconcile his imagination, it acquires new terrors, and overcomes his feeble courage : But when the menaces of superstition are joined to this natural timidity, no wonder it quite deprives men of all power over their lives ; since even many pleasures and enjoyments, to which we are carried by a strong propensity, are torn from us by this inhuman tyrant. Let us here endeavour to restore men to their native liberty, by examining all the common arguments against suicide, and showing that that action may be free from every imputation of guilt or blame, according to the sentiments of all the ancient philosophers.

If suicide be criminal, it must be a transgression of our duty to either God, our neighbour, or ourselves. To prove that suicide is no transgression of our duty to God, the following considerations may perhaps suffice. In order to govern the material world, the almighty Creator has established general and immutable laws, by which all bodies, from the greatest planet to the smallest particle of matter,

matter, are maintained in their proper sphere and function. To govern the animal world, he has endowed all living creatures with bodily and mental powers; with senses, passions, appetites, memory, and judgment, by which they are impelled or regulated in that course of life to which they are destined. These two distinct principles of the material and animal world continually encroach upon each other, and mutually retard or forward each other's operation. The powers of men and of all other animals are restrained and directed by the nature and qualities of the surrounding bodies; and the modifications and actions of these bodies are incessantly altered by the operation of all animals. Man is stopt by rivers in his passage over the surface of the earth; and rivers, when properly directed, lend their force to the motion of machines which serve to the use of man. But though the provinces of the material and animal powers are not kept entirely separate, there results from thence no discord or disorder in the creation; on the contrary, from the mixture, union, and contrast of all the various powers of inanimate bodies and living creatures, arises that sympathy, harmony, and proportion, which affords the surest argument of Supreme Wisdom. The providence of the Deity appears not immediately in any operation, but governs every thing by those general and immutable

table laws which have been established from the beginning of time. All events, in one sense, may be pronounced the action of the Almighty; they all proceed from those powers with which he has endowed his creatures. A house which falls by its own weight, is not brought to ruin by his providence more than one destroyed by the hands of men; nor are the human faculties less his workmanship than the laws of motion and gravitation. When the passions play, when the judgment dictates, when the limbs obey; this is all the operation of God; and upon these animate principles, as well as upon the inanimate, has he established the government of the universe. Every event is alike important in the eyes of that infinite Being, who takes in at one glance the most distant regions of space, and remotest periods of time. There is no event, however important to us, which he has exempted from the general laws that govern the universe, or which he has peculiarly reserved for his own immediate action and operation. The revolution of states and empires depends upon the smallest caprice or passion of single men; and the lives of men are shortened or extended by the smallest accident of air or diet, sunshine or tempest. Nature still continues her progress and operation; and if general laws be ever broke by particular volitions of the Deity, it is after a manner which entirely escapes

escapes human observation. As, on the one hand, the elements and other inanimate parts of the creation carry on their action without regard to the particular interest and situation of men; so men are entrusted to their own judgment and discretion in the various shocks of matter, and may employ every faculty with which they are endowed, in order to provide for their ease, happiness, or preservation. What is the meaning then of that principle, that a man who, tired of life, and hunted by pain and misery, bravely overcomes all the natural terrors of death, and makes his escape from this cruel scene; that such a man, I say, has incurred the indignation of his Creator by encroaching on the office of divine providence, and disturbing the order of the universe? Shall we assert, that the Almighty has reserved to himself in any peculiar manner the disposal of the lives of men, and has not submitted that event, in common with others, to the general laws by which the universe is governed? This is plainly false: the lives of men depend upon the same laws as the lives of all other animals; and these are subjected to the general laws of matter and motion. The fall of a tower, or the infusion of a poison, will destroy a man equally with the meanest creature; an inundation sweeps away every thing without distinction that comes within the reach of its fury. Since therefore the lives of
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men are for ever dependent on the general laws of matter and motion, is a man's disposing of his life criminal, because in every case it is criminal to encroach upon these laws or disturb their operation? But this seems absurd: All animals are entrusted to their own prudence and skill for their conduct in the world; and have full authority, as far as their power extends, to alter all the operations of nature. Without the exercise of this authority they could not subsist a moment; every action, every motion of a man, innovates on the order of some parts of matter, and diverts from their ordinary course the general laws of motion. Putting together therefore these conclusions, we find that human life depends upon the general laws of matter and motion, and that it is no encroachment on the office of Providence to disturb or alter these general laws: Has not every one, of consequence, the free disposal of his own life? And may he not lawfully employ that power with which nature has endowed him? In order to destroy the evidence of this conclusion, we must show a reason why this particular case is excepted. Is it because human life is of such great importance, that it is a presumption for human prudence to dispose of it? But the life of a man is of no greater importance to the universe than that of an oyster: And were it of ever so great importance, the order of human nature has actually sub-

submitted it to human prudence, and reduced us to the necessity, in every incident, of determining concerning it.

Were the disposal of human life so much reserved as the peculiar province of the Almighty, that it were an encroachment on his right for men to dispose of their own lives, it would be equally criminal to act for the preservation of life as for its destruction. If I turn aside a stone which is falling upon my head, I disturb the course of nature; and I invade the peculiar province of the Almighty, by lengthening out my life beyond the period which by the general laws of matter and motion he had assigned it.

A hair, a fly, an insect, is able to destroy this mighty being whose life is of such importance. Is it an absurdity to suppose that human prudence may lawfully dispose of what depends on such insignificant causes? It would be no crime in me to divert the Nile or Danube from its course, were I able to effect such purposes. Where then is the crime of turning a few ounces of blood from their natural channel?—Do you imagine that I repine at Providence, or curse my creation, because I go out of life, and put a period to a being which, were it to continue, would render me miserable? Far be such sentiments from me. I am only convinced of a matter of fact which you yourself acknowledge possible, that hu-
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man life may be unhappy; and that my existence, if further prolonged, would become ineligible: but I thank Providence, both for the good which I have already enjoyed, and for the power with which I am endowed of escaping the ills that threaten me. To you it belongs to repine at Providence, who foolishly imagine that you have no such power; and who must still prolong a hated life, though loaded with pain and sickness, with shame and poverty.—Do not you teach, that when any ill befalls me, though by the malice of my enemies, I ought to be resigned to Providence; and that the actions of men are the operations of the Almighty, as much as the actions of inanimate beings? When I fall upon my own sword, therefore, I receive my death equally from the hands of the Deity as if it had proceeded from a lion, a precipice, or a fever. The submission which you require to Providence, in every calamity that befalls me, excludes not human skill and industry, if possibly by their means I can avoid or escape the calamity. And why may I not employ one remedy as well as another? If my life be not my own, it were criminal for me to put it in danger, as well as to dispose of it; nor could one man deserve the appellation of *hero*, whom glory or friendship transports into the greatest dangers; and another merit the reproach of *wretch* or *miscreant*, who puts a period to his

life from the same or like motives.—There is no being, which possesses any power or faculty, that it receives not from its Creator; nor is there any one, which by ever so irregular an action, can encroach upon the plan of his providence, or disorder the universe. Its operations are his works equally with that chain of events which it invades; and whichever principle prevails, we may for that very reason conclude it to be most favoured by him. Be it animate or inanimate; rational or irrational; it is all the same case: its power is still derived from the supreme Creator, and is alike comprehended in the order of his providence. When the horror of pain prevails over the love of life; when a voluntary action anticipates the effects of blind causes; it is only in consequence of those powers and principles which he has implanted in his creatures. Divine Providence is still inviolate, and placed far beyond the reach of human injuries. It is impious, says the old Roman superstition, to divert rivers from their course, or invade the prerogatives of nature. It is impious, says the French superstition, to inoculate for the small-pox, or usurp the business of Providence, by voluntarily producing distempers and maladies. It is impious, says the modern European superstition, to put a period to our own life, and thereby rebel against our Creator: And why not impious, say I, to build houses, cultivate the

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ground, or fail upon the ocean? In all these actions we employ our powers of mind and body to produce some innovation in the course of nature; and in none of them do we any more. They are all of them therefore equally innocent, or equally criminal. *But you are placed by Providence, like a sentinel, in a particular station; and when you desert it without being recalled, you are equally guilty of rebellion against your Almighty Sovereign, and have incurred his displeasure.*—I ask, Why do you conclude that Providence has placed me in this station? For my part, I find that I owe my birth to a long chain of causes, of which many depended upon voluntary actions of men. *But Providence guided all these causes, and nothing happens in the universe without its consent and co-operation.* If so, then neither does my death, however voluntary, happen without its consent; and whenever pain or sorrow so far overcome my patience, as to make me tired of life, I may conclude that I am recalled from my station in the clearest and most express terms. It is Providence surely that has placed me at this present moment in this chamber: But may I not leave it when I think proper, without being liable to the imputation of having deserted my post or station? When I shall be dead, the principles of which I am composed will still perform their part in the universe, and will be equally useful in the grand fabric, as when they composed

posed this individual creature. The difference to the whole will be no greater than betwixt any being in a chamber and in the open air. The one change is of more importance to me than the other; but not more so to the universe.

It is a kind of blasphemy to imagine that any created being can disturb the order of the world, or invade the business of Providence! It supposes, that that being possesses powers and faculties which it received not from its Creator, and which are not subordinate to his government and authority. A man may disturb society, no doubt, and thereby incur the displeasure of the Almighty: But the government of the world is placed far beyond his reach and violence. And how does it appear that the Almighty is displeased with those actions that disturb society? By the principles which he has implanted in human nature, and which inspire us with a sentiment of remorse if we ourselves have been guilty of such actions, and with that of blame and disapprobation, if we ever observe them in others.—Let us now examine, according to the method proposed, whether Suicide be of this kind of actions, and be a breach of our duty to our *neighbour* and to *society*.

A man who retires from life, does no harm to society: He only ceases to do good; which, if it is an injury, is of the lowest kind.—All our ob-

ligations to do good to society seem to imply something reciprocal. I receive the benefits of society, and therefore ought to promote its interests; but when I withdraw myself altogether from society, can I be bound any longer? But allowing that our obligations to do good were perpetual, they have certainly some bounds; I am not obliged to do a small good to society at the expence of a great harm to myself: why then should I prolong a miserable existence, because of some frivolous advantage which the public may perhaps receive from me? If upon account of age and infirmities, I may lawfully resign any office, and employ my time altogether in fencing against these calamities, and alleviating as much as possible the miseries of my future life; why may I not cut short these miseries at once by an action which is no more prejudicial to society?—But suppose that it is no longer in my power to promote the interest of society; suppose that I am a burden to it; suppose that my life hinders some person from being much more useful to society: In such cases, my resignation of life must not only be innocent, but laudable. And most people who lie under any temptation to abandon existence, are in some such situation; those who have health, or power, or authority, have commonly better reason to be in humour with the world.

—Do not think that I am in a hurry to quit the world, but that I am in a hurry to quit the world.

A man is engaged in a conspiracy for the public interest; is seized upon suspicion; is threatened with the rack; and knows from his own weakness that the secret will be extorted from him: Could such a one consult the public interest better than by putting a quick period to a miserable life? This was the case of the famous and brave Strozzi of Florence.—Again, suppose a malefactor is justly condemned to a shameful death; can any reason be imagined why he may not anticipate his punishment, and save himself all the anguish of thinking on its dreadful approaches? He invades the business of Providence no more than the magistrate did, who ordered his execution; and his voluntary death is equally advantageous to society, by ridding it of a pernicious member.

That Suicide may often be consistent with interest and with our duty to ourselves; no one can question, who allows that age, sickness, or misfortune, may render life a burden, and make it worse even than annihilation. I believe that no man ever threw away life while it was worth keeping. For such is our natural horror of death, that small motives will never be able to reconcile us to it; and though perhaps the situation of a man's health or fortune did not seem to require this remedy, we may at least be assured, that any one who, without apparent reason, has had re-

course to it, was curst with such an incurable depravity or gloominess of temper as must poison all enjoyment, and render him equally miserable as if he had been loaded with the most grievous misfortunes.—If Suicide be supposed a crime, it is only cowardice can impel us to it. If it be no crime, both prudence and courage should engage us to rid ourselves at once of existence when it becomes a burden. It is the only way that we can then be useful to society, by setting an example, which, if imitated, would preserve to every one his chance for happiness in life, and would effectually free him from all danger of misery.

HUME.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

THE rage of suicide will never become epidemical. Nature has sufficiently guarded against it; and hope and fear are the powerful curbs she makes use of to stop the hand of the wretch uplifted to be his own executioner.

There is one thing indeed which may cause some surprise, and which deserves to be seriously discussed; which is, that almost all the great heroes among the Romans, during the civil wars, killed themselves when they lost a battle; and that we do not find an instance of a single leader or great man in the disputes of the League, the Fronde,

Fronde, or during the troubles of Italy and Germany, who put an end to his life with his own hand. It is true that these latter were Christians, and there may be a great difference between a Christian soldier and a Pagan; and yet how comes it that those very men who were so easily withheld by Christianity from putting an end to their own lives, should be restrained neither by that nor any other consideration when they had a mind to poison, assassinate, or publicly execute a vanquished enemy?—Does not the Christian religion forbid the manner of taking away the life of a fellow-creature, if possible, more than that of our own? The advocates for suicide tell us, that it is very allowable to quit our house when we are weary of it. Agreed: but most men had rather lie in a bad house, than sleep in the open fields.—If it be required clearly to demonstrate that it is allowable for a man to kill himself, it may be answered, that there is nothing to prove, and that we have only to examine if we prefer death to life.

But then let us ask, Why Cato, Brutus, Cassius, Anthony, Otho, and so many others, gave themselves death with so much resolution, and that our leaders of parties suffered themselves to be taken alive by their enemies, or waste the remains of a wretched old age in a dungeon? Some refined wits pretend to say, That the ancients had

no real courage; that Cato acted like a coward in putting an end to his own life, and that he would have showed more greatness of soul in crouching beneath the victorious Caesar. This may be very well in an ode, or as a figure in rhetoric: but it is very certain there must be some courage to resign a life coolly by the edge of a sword; some strength of mind thus to overcome the most powerful instinct of nature; in a word, that such an act shows a greater share of ferocity than weakness. When a sick man is in a phrensy, we cannot say he has no strength, though we may say it is the strength of a madman.

Self-murder was forbid by the Pagan as well as by the Christian religion. There was even a place allotted in hell to those who put an end to their own lives. Witness these lines of the Poet:

*Proxima deinde tenet massi loca, qui sibi lethum
Infantes peperere manu, lucemque perosti
Proiecere animas; quam vellent æthere in alto
Nunc et pauperiam, et duris perferre labores.
Fata obstant, tristisque Palus inamabilis unda
Adligat, et novies Styx interfusa coercet.*

VIRGIL, *Æneid.*

This was the religion of the Heathens; and, notwithstanding the torments they were to meet with in the other world, it was esteemed an honour to quit this by giving themselves death by their own hands: so contradictory are the manners

ners of men! Is not the custom of duelling still unhappily accounted honourable amongst us, though prohibited by reason, by religion, and by all laws divine and human? If Cato and Cæsar, Anthony and Augustus, did not challenge each other to a duel, it was not that they were less brave than ourselves. If the Duke of Montmorenci, Marechal Marillac, De Thou, Cinq-Mars, and many others, rather chose to be dragged to execution like the vilest miscreants, than put an end to their own lives like Cato and Brutus, it was not that they had less courage than those Romans. The true reason is, that it was not then the fashion at Paris to kill one's self on such occasions; whereas it was an established custom with the Romans.

The women on the Malabar coast throw themselves alive into the flames in which the bodies of their dead husbands are burning. Is it because they have more resolution than Cornelia? No; but the custom of the country is for wives to burn themselves.

Custom and fancy oft derivate decide,
And what is this man's shame is t' other's pride.

VOLTAIRE.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

WE do not find in history that the Romans
ever

ever killed themselves without a cause: but the English are apt to commit suicide most unaccountably; they destroy themselves even in the bosom of happiness. This action among the Romans was the effect of education; being connected with their principles and customs: Among the English it is the consequence of a distemper; being connected with the physical state of the machine, and independent of every other cause. It may be complicated with the scurvy; which, in some countries especially, renders a man whimsical and insupportable to himself. See Pirard's Voyages, part 2. chap. 21.

In all probability it is a defect of the filtration of the nervous juice: The machine, whose motive faculties are often unexerted, is weary of itself; the soul feels no pain, but a certain uneasiness in existing. Pain is a local sensation, which leads us to the desire of seeing an end of it; but the burden of life, which prompts us to the desire of ceasing to exist, is an evil confined to no particular part.

It is evident that the civil laws of some countries may have reasons for branding suicide with infamy; but in England it cannot be punished without punishing the effects of madness.

MONTESQUIEU.

W A

A DIALOGUE ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

A. I cannot comprehend how a man should be so mad as to blow out his brains; and the bare idea of it shocks me.

W. What right has any man, in speaking of an action, immediately to pronounce that it is mad, or wise, or good, or bad? What is meant by all this? Have you carefully examined the interior motives for the action? Have you fairly unfolded all the reasons which gave rise to it, and which made it necessary? If you did all this, you would not be so quick with your decision.

A. However, you will allow some actions are criminal, whatever were the motives for committing them.

W. Granted; but still there are more exceptions to make. There is a crime; but the man who is driven to it by extreme poverty, with no design but to save himself and his family from perishing for want, must he too be punished? and is he not rather an object of our compassion? Who shall throw the first stone at a husband that, in the first heat of just resentment, sacrifices a faithless wife and her perfidious seducer? or at a young girl whom love only has led astray? Even our laws, our pedantic laws, our old cruel laws, relent and withdraw their punishment.

A.

A. These examples are very different; because a man, under the influence of violent passion, is incapable of reflection, and is looked upon as drunk or out of his senses.

W. Oh! you people of sound understandings are very ready to pronounce sentence, and talk of extravagance, and madness, and intoxication; you are quiet, and care for nothing; you avoid the drunken man, and detest the extravagant; you pass on the other side like the Priest, and like the Pharisee you thank God that you are not like one of them. I have more than once experienced the effects of drinking; my passions have always bordered upon extravagance, and I am not ashamed to own it. Do I not find that those superior men, who have done any great or extraordinary action, have in all times been treated as if they were intoxicated or mad?—And in private life, too, is it not insufferable, that if a young man does any thing uncommonly noble or generous, the world immediately says he is out of his senses? Take shame to yourselves, ye people of discretion! take shame to yourselves, ye sages of the earth!

A. This is one of your extravagant flights; you always go beyond the mark; and here you are most undoubtedly wrong, to compare suicide, which is in question, with great actions; for it can only be looked upon as a weakness. It is

much

much easier to die than to bear a life of misery with fortitude.

W. You call this a weakness: beware of being carried away by sounds! Suppose a people groaning under the yoke of tyranny; do you call them weak, when at length they throw it off and break their chains? The man who, to rescue his house from the flames, exerts all his powers, lifts burdens with ease that he could scarcely move when his mind was at peace; he who attacks and puts to flight half a score of his enemies; are these weak people? My good friend, if resistance is a mark of strength, can the highest degree of resistance be called a weakness?

A. Begging your pardon, I don't think the examples you have brought have any relation to the subject in question.

W. That may very likely be; for I have been often told, that my way of combining things appeared extravagant. But let us try to set the matter in another light: let us examine what is the situation of a man who resolves to free himself from the burden of life—a burden that is in general so much desired—and let us enter into his feelings; for we cannot otherwise reason fairly on the subject.—Human nature has certain limits; there is a degree of joy, grief, pain, which it is able to endure; and beyond that degree it is annihilated. We are not, therefore, to inquire

whether a man is weak or strong; but whether he can pass the bounds of nature, and the measure of his sufferings either of mind or body: and I think it is as absurd to say that a man who destroys himself is a coward, as to call a man a coward who dies of a malignant fever.]

A. Paradox, all paradox! my friend.

W. Not so paradoxical as you imagine. You will allow that we call a disease mortal; in which nature is so severely attacked, that what remains is not sufficient to raise her up, and set her a-going again.—Let us apply this to the mind; let us see how ideas work, and how impressions fix upon it, till at length a violent passion takes entire possession, destroys all the powers it possessed when at ease, and entirely subdues it.—It is in vain that a man of sound understanding and cool temper sees the miserable situation of a wretch in such circumstances; it is in vain that he counsels him. It is like the man in health, who sits by the bed of his dying friend, but is unable to communicate to him the smallest portion of his strength.

A. I think what you say is too general.

W. Do you recollect the circumstances of the the girl who lately drowned herself?—A good young creature, so accustomed to the narrow sphere of domestic labour, and the business of the week, that she knew of no pleasure but taking a walk in the fields on a Sunday, dancing once per-

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haps in the holidays, and the rest of her time only talking with her next neighbour of the news and little quarrels of the village. At length her heart feels new and uncommon wishes; all that used to please her, now by degrees becomes tasteless, till she meets with a man to whom a new affection invisibly attaches her; from that time her hopes are all centred in him; the whole surrounding world is forgotten by her; she sees, hears, desires nothing but him; he alone occupies all her thoughts. Her heart having never felt the baneful pleasure arising from light vanity, her wishes tend immediately to the object of them; she hopes to belong to him, and in eternal bonds expects to enjoy all the desires of her heart, and to realize the ideas of happiness which she has formed. His repeated promises confirm her hopes; his fondness increases her passion; her whole soul is lost and drowned in pleasure; her heart is all rapture. At length she stretches out her arms to embrace the object of her vows—all is vanished away; her lover forsakes her.—Amazed! petrified! she stands senseless before the abyss of misery she sees before her: all around is darkness; for her there is no prospect, nor hope, nor consolation: she is forsaken by him in whom her life was bound up; and in the wide universe which is before her, and among so many who might repair her loss, she feels alone and abandoned by

the whole world. Thus blinded, thus impelled, by the piercing grief which wrings her heart, she plunges into the deep to put an end to her torments. Such, my dear friend, is the history of many men: and is it not a parallel case with illness? Nature has no way to escape: her powers exhausted, and contending powers to struggle with, death must be the consequence. Wo unto the man who could hear this situation described, and who could say, "Ah, foolish girl! why did not she wait till time had worn off the impression? Her despair would have been softened, and she would have found another lover to comfort her." One might as well say, "A fool! he died of a fever. Why did he not wait till he had recovered his strength, till his blood was calm? then all would have been well, and he would have been alive now."

A. I cannot allow the comparison to be just: You only bring the example of a simple and innocent girl; but I cannot comprehend how a man of sense, whose views are more enlarged, and who sees such various consolations, should ever suffer himself to fall into such a state of despair.

W. My good friend, whatever is the education of a man, whatever is his understanding, still he is a man; and the little reason that he possesses, either does not act at all, or acts very feebly, when the passions are let loose, or rather when the

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the boundaries of human nature close in upon him.—But we will talk of this another time.—Alas! my heart is full, and I see we must part without conviction on either side.—How rarely do men understand one another! * * *

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

ONE lifts up the curtain; one passes to the other side—that is all!—And why all these delays? why all these fears?—Because we know not what is behind—because there is no returning—and we suppose that all is darkness and confusion where there is uncertainty. * * *

SUPERSTITION.

NO man can cast a penetrative look on the various superstitions of the world, without conceiving the greatest contempt for the human race in general, and for himself in particular. What! he will say; were thousands of years necessary to convince men equally intelligent with myself of the folly of Paganism? Do the Jews and the Guebres still persist in their errors? Do the Musulmans still believe in Mahomet; and may it be thousands of years before they are convinced of the falsity of the Koran? Man must certainly be

a very weak and credulous animal; and in short, this planet of ours must be, as a wise man said, the madhouse of the universe.

HELVETIUS.

SUMPTUARY LAWS SUPERFLUOUS.

AS frugality increases, and prodigality diminishes, the public capital; so the conduct of those whose expence just equals their revenue, without either accumulating or encroaching, neither increases nor diminishes it. Some modes of expence, however, seem to contribute more to the growth of public opulence than others.

The revenue of an individual may be spent either in things which are consumed immediately, and in which one day's expence can neither alleviate nor support that of another; or it may be spent in things more durable, which can therefore be accumulated, and in which every day's expence may, as he chooses, either alleviate or support and heighten the effect of that of the following day. A man of fortune, for example, may either spend his revenue in a profuse and sumptuous table, and in maintaining a great number of menial servants, and a multitude of dogs and horses; or, contenting himself with a frugal table and few attendants, he may lay out the greater part of it in adorning his house or his coun-

country villa, in useful or ornamental buildings, in useful or ornamental furniture, in collecting books, statues, pictures; or in things more frivolous, jewels, baubles, ingenious trinkets of different kinds; or, what is most trifling of all, in amassing a great wardrobe of fine clothes, like the favourite and minister of a great prince who died a few years ago. Were two men of equal fortune to spend their revenue, the one chiefly in the one way, the other in the other; the magnificence of the person whose expence had been chiefly in durable commodities, would be continually increasing, every day's expence contributing something to support and heighten the effect of that of the following day: that of the other, on the contrary, would be no greater at the end of the period than at the beginning. The former too would, at the end of the period, be the richer man of the two: he would have a stock of goods of some kind or other, which, though it might not be worth all that it cost, would always be worth something. No trace or vestige of the expence of the latter would remain; and the effects of ten or twenty years profusion would be as completely annihilated as if they had never existed.

As the one mode of expence is more favourable than the other to the opulence of an individual, so it is likewise to that of a nation. The
houses,

houses, the furniture, the cloathing of the rich, in a little time become useful to the inferior and middling ranks of people : they are able to purchase them when their superiors grow weary of them ; and the general accommodation of the whole people is thus gradually improved when this mode of expence becomes universal among men of fortune. In countries which have long been rich, you will frequently find the inferior ranks of people in possession both of houses and furniture perfectly good and entire ; but of which neither the one could have been built, nor the other have been made for their use. What was formerly a seat of the family of Seymour, is now an inn upon the Bath road. The marriage-bed of James I. of Great Britain, which his queen brought with her from Denmark, as a present fit for a sovereign to make to a sovereign, was a few years ago the ornament of an ale-house at Dunfermline. In some ancient cities, which either have been long stationary or have gone somewhat to decay, you will sometimes scarce find a single house which could have been built for its present inhabitants. If you go into those houses too, you will frequently find many excellent, though antiquated pieces of furniture, which are still very fit for use, and which could as little have been made for them. Noble palaces, magnificent villas, great collections of books, statues, pictures,

pictures, and other curiosities, are frequently both an ornament and an honour, not only to the neighbourhood, but to the whole country to which they belong. Versailles is an ornament and an honour to France, Stowe and Wilton to England. Italy still continues to command some sort of veneration by the number of monuments of this kind which it possesses, though the wealth which produced them has decayed, and though the genius which planned them seems to be extinguished, perhaps from not having the same employment.

The expence, too, which is laid out in durable commodities is favourable, not only to accumulation, but to frugality. If a person should at any time exceed in it, he can easily reform without exposing himself to the censure of the public. To reduce very much the number of his servants, to reform his table from great profusion to great frugality, to lay down his equipage after he has once set it up, are changes which cannot escape the observation of his neighbours, and which are supposed to imply some acknowledgment of preceding bad conduct. Few therefore of those who have once been so unfortunate as to launch out too far into this sort of expence, have afterwards the courage to reform, till ruin and bankruptcy oblige them. But if a person has at any time been at too great an expence in building,

ing, in furniture, in books, or pictures, no imprudence can be inferred from his changing his conduct. These are things in which further expence is frequently rendered unnecessary by former expence; and when a person stops short, he appears to do so, not because he has exceeded his fortune, but because he has satisfied his fancy.

The expence, besides, that is laid out in durable commodities, gives maintenance commonly to a greater number of people than that which is employed in the most profuse hospitality. Of two or three hundred weight of provisions which may sometimes be served up at a great festival, one half perhaps is thrown to the dunghill; and there is always a great deal wasted and abused: but if the expence of this entertainment had been employed in setting to work masons, carpenters, upholsterers, mechanics, &c. a quantity of provisions of equal value would have been distributed among a still greater number of people, who would have bought them in penny-worths and pound weights, and not have lost or thrown away a single ounce of them. In the one way, besides, this expence maintains productive, in the other unproductive hands. In the one way, therefore, it increases; in the other it does not increase the exchangeable value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the country.

I would not, however, by all this be understood

stood to mean, that the one species of expence always betokens a more liberal or generous spirit than the other. When a man of fortune spends his revenue chiefly in hospitality, he shares the greater part of it with his friends and companions; but when he employs it in purchasing such durable commodities, he often spends the whole upon his own person, and gives nothing to any body without an equivalent. The latter species of expence therefore, especially when directed towards frivolous objects, the little ornaments of dress and furniture, jewels, trinkets, gewgaws, frequently indicates, not only a trifling, but a base and selfish disposition. All that I mean is, that the one sort of expence, as it always occasions some accumulation of valuable commodities, as it is more favourable to private frugality, and consequently to the increase of the public capital, and as it maintains productive rather than unproductive hands, conduces more than the other to the growth of public opulence.

A SMITH.

SYMPATHY AND ITS EFFECTS IN THE DISTRESSES OF OTHERS.

IT is by this passion we enter into the concerns of others, that we are moved as they are moved, and are never suffered to be indifferent spectators
of

of almost any thing which men can do or suffer. For sympathy must be considered as a sort of substitution, by which we are put into the place of another man, and affected in many respects as he is affected. It is by this principle chiefly, that poetry, painting, and other affecting arts, transfuse their passions from one breast to another, and are often capable of grafting a delight on wretchedness, misery, and death itself. It is a common observation, that objects which in the reality would shock, are, in tragical and such like representations, the source of a very high species of pleasure. This, taken as a fact, has been the cause of much reasoning. The satisfaction has been commonly attributed, first, to the comfort we receive in considering that so melancholy a story is no more than a fiction; and next, to the contemplation of our own freedom from the evils which we see represented. But it is a practice much too common in inquiries of this nature, to attribute the cause of feelings, which merely arise from the mechanical structure of our bodies, or from the natural frame or constitution of our minds, to certain conclusions of the reasoning faculty on the objects presented to us; for the influence of reason in producing our passions, is nothing near so extensive as it is commonly believed.

To examine this point with respect to tragedy

in a proper manner, we must previously consider how we are affected by the feelings of our fellow-creatures in circumstances of real distress. We certainly have a degree of delight, and that no small one, in the real misfortunes and pains of others: For let the affection be what it will in appearance, if it does not make us shun such objects; if, on the contrary, it induces us to approach them; if it makes us dwell upon them; in this case we must have a delight or pleasure of some species or other in contemplating objects of this kind. Do we not read the authentic histories of scenes of this nature with as much pleasure as romances or poems, where the incidents are fictitious? The prosperity of no empire, nor the grandeur of no king, can so agreeably affect in the reading, as the ruin of the state of Macedonia, and the distress of its unhappy prince. Such a catastrophe touches us in history as much as the destruction of Troy does in fable. Our delight, in cases of this kind, is very greatly heightened, if the sufferer be some excellent person who sinks under an unworthy fortune. Scipio and Cato are both virtuous characters; but we are more deeply affected by the violent death of the one, and the ruin of the great cause he adhered to, than with the deserved triumphs and uninterrupted prosperity of the other: for terror is a passion which always produces delight when

It does not press too close; and pity is a passion accompanied with pleasure, because it arises from love and social affection. Whenever we are formed by nature to any active purpose, the passion which animates us to it is attended with delight or a pleasure of some kind, let the subject-matter be what it will: and as our Creator has designed we should be united by the bond of sympathy, he has strengthened that bond by a proportionable delight; and there most, where our sympathy is most wanted, in the distresses of others. If this passion was simply painful, we should shun with the greatest care all persons and places that could excite such a passion; as some, who are so far gone in indolence as not to endure any strong impression, actually do. But the case is widely different with the greater part of mankind: there is no spectacle we so eagerly pursue as that of some uncommon and grievous calamity; so that whether the misfortune is before our eyes, or whether they are turned back to it in history, it always touches with delight. This is not an unmixed delight, but blended with no small uneasiness. The delight we have in such things hinders us from shunning scenes of misery; and the pain we feel, prompts us to relieve ourselves in relieving those who suffer: and all this antecedent to any *reasoning*, by an instinct that works us to its own purposes without our concurrence.

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It is thus in real calamities. In imitated distresses, the only difference is the pleasure resulting from the effects of imitation : for it is never so perfect but we can perceive it is ; and on that principle are somewhat pleased with it. And, indeed, in some cases, we derive as much or more pleasure from that source, than from the thing itself. But we shall be much mistaken, if we attribute any considerable part of our satisfaction in tragedy, to the consideration that tragedy is a deceit, and its representations no realities. The nearer it approaches the reality, and the further it removes us from all idea of fiction, the more perfect is its power: But be its power what it will, it never approaches to what it represents. Choose a day on which to represent a most sublime and affecting tragedy ; and just at the moment when the minds of the audience are erect with expectation, let it be reported, that a state criminal of high rank is on the point of being executed in the adjoining square ; in a moment the emptiness of the theatre would demonstrate the comparative weakness of the imitative arts, and proclaim the triumph of the real sympathy. The notion of our having a simple pain in the reality, yet a delight in the representation, arises from hence, that we do not sufficiently distinguish what we would by no means choose to do, from what we would be eager enough to see if it was once done. We

delight in seeing things, which, so far from doing, our heartiest wishes would be to see redressed. This noble capital, the pride of England, no man is so strangely wicked as to desire to see destroyed by an earthquake, though he should be removed himself to the greatest distance from the danger: But suppose such a fatal accident; what numbers would crowd to behold the ruins, and amongst them many who would have been content never to have seen London in its glory? Nor is it, either in real or fictitious distresses, our immunity from them which produces our delight: This is never discoverable; it is a mistake owing to a sort of sophism, by which we are frequently imposed upon; it arises from our distinguishing between what is indeed a necessary condition to our doing or suffering any thing in general, and what is the cause of some particular act. If a man kills me with a sword, it is a necessary condition to this that we should have been both alive before the fact; and yet it would be absurd to say, that our being both living creatures was the cause of his crime and of my death. So it is certain, that it is absolutely necessary my life should be out of any imminent hazard before I can take a delight in the sufferings of others, real or imaginary; or indeed in any thing else from any cause whatsoever. But then it is a sophism to argue from thence, that this immunity is the cause
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of my delight, either on these or any such occasions. No one can distinguish such a cause of satisfaction in his own mind: nay, when we do not suffer any very acute pain, nor are exposed to any imminent danger of our lives, we can feel for others while we suffer ourselves; and often then most when we are softened by affliction: we see with pity even distresses which we would accept in the place of our own.

BURKE.

THE PRINCIPLE OF SYMPATHY AND ANTIPATHY, NOT A PROPER STANDARD OF RIGHT AND WRONG.

BY the principle of sympathy and antipathy, I mean that principle which approves or disapproves of certain actions, not on account of their tending to augment the happiness, nor yet on account of their tending to diminish the happiness, of the party whose interest is in question; but merely because a man finds himself disposed to approve or disapprove of them: holding up that approbation or disapprobation as a sufficient reason for itself, and disclaiming the necessity of looking out for any extrinsic ground.

It is manifest that this is rather a principle in name than reality: it is not a positive principle of itself, so much as a term employed to signify the

negation of all principle. What one expects to find in a principle, is something that points out some external consideration, as a means of warranting and guiding the internal sentiments of approbation and disapprobation : This expectation is but ill fulfilled by a proposition, which does neither more nor less than hold up each of those sentiments as a ground and standard for itself.

In looking over the catalogue of human actions (says a partisan of this principle), in order to determine which of them are to be marked with the seal of disapprobation, you need but to take counsel of your own feelings: whatever you find in yourself a propensity to condemn, is wrong for that very reason. For the same reason it is also meet for punishment: in what proportion it is adverse to utility, or whether it be adverse to utility at all, is a matter that makes no difference. In that same *proportion*, also, is it meet for punishment: if you hate much, punish much; if you hate little, punish little: punish as you hate. If you hate not at all, punish not at all: the fine feelings of the soul are not to be overborne and tyrannized by the harsh and rugged dictates of political utility.

The principle of sympathy and antipathy is most apt to err on the side of severity. It is for applying punishment in many cases which deserve none: in many cases which deserve some, it is for applying more than they deserve. There is no incident

cident imaginable, be it ever so trivial, and so remote from mischief, from which this principle may not extract a ground of punishment. Any difference in taste; any difference in opinion; upon one subject as well as upon another; no disagreement so trifling which perseverance and altercation will not render serious: each becomes in the other's eyes an enemy, and, if laws permit, a criminal. This is one of the circumstances by which the human race is distinguished (not much indeed to its advantage) from the brute creation.

King James I. of England had conceived a violent antipathy against Arians; two of whom he burnt. This gratification he procured himself without much difficulty: the notions of the times were favourable to it. He wrote a furious book against Vorstius, for being what was called an *Arminian*; for Vorstius was at a distance. He also wrote a furious book called *A Counterblast to Tobacco*, against the use of that drug, which Sir Walter Raleigh had then lately introduced. Had the notions of the times co-operated with him, he would have burnt the Anabaptist and the smoker of tobacco in the same fire. However, he had the satisfaction of putting Raleigh to death afterwards, though for another crime.

Disputes concerning the comparative excellence of French and Italian music have occasioned very serious bickerings at Paris. One of the parties

ties would not have been sorry (says Mr D'Alembert) to have brought government into the quarrel. Pretences were sought after and urged. Long before that, a dispute of a like nature, and of at least equal warmth, had been kindled at London upon the comparative merits of two composers at London; where riots between the approvers and disapprovers of a new play are at this day not unfrequent. The ground quarrel between the Big-endians and the Little-endians in the fable, was not more frivolous than many an one which has laid empires desolate. In Russia, it is said, there was a time when some thousands of persons lost their lives in a quarrel, in which the government had taken part, about the number of fingers to be used in making the sign of the cross. This was in days of yore: the ministers of Catherine II are better instructed than to take any other part in such disputes, than that of preventing the parties concerned from doing one another a mischief.

There are two things which are very apt to be confounded, but which it imports us carefully to distinguish:—The motive or cause which, by operating in a man's mind, is productive of any act; and the ground or reason which warrant a legislator, or other bystander, in regarding that act with an eye of approbation. When the act happens, in the particular instance in question, to be pro-

productive of effects which we approve of, much more if we happen to observe that the same motive may frequently be productive in other instances of the like effects, we are apt to transfer our approbation to the motive itself, and to assume, as the just ground for the approbation we bestow on the act, the circumstance of its originating from that motive. It is in this way that the sentiment of antipathy has often been considered as a just ground of action. Antipathy, for instance, in such or such a case, is the cause of an action which is attended with good effects: but this does not make it a just ground of action in that case, any more than in any other. Still further: Not only the effects are good, but the agent sees beforehand that they will be so. This may make the action indeed a perfectly right action; but it does not make antipathy a right ground of action. For the same sentiment of antipathy, if implicitly deferred to, may be and very frequently is productive of the very worst effects. Antipathy therefore can never be a right ground of action. No more therefore can resentment, which is but a modification of antipathy. The only right ground of action that can possibly subsist is, after all, the consideration of utility, which, if it is a right principle of action and of approbation in any one case, is so in every other. Other principles in abundance, that is, other motives, may be the reasons why such
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and such an act *has* been done; that is, the reasons or causes of its being done: But it is this alone that can be the reason why it might or ought to have been done. Antipathy or resentment requires always to be regulated, to prevent its doing mischief: To be regulated by what? Always by the principle of utility. The principle of utility neither requires nor admits of any other regulation than itself.

J. BENTHAM.

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TASTE.

T.

TASTE.

MANY people have a kind of happy instinct in matters of taste; and determine often rightly upon difficult subjects without having any principles to direct their judgments. It is evident, if those persons natural faculties were cultivated, they would have better taste than others. But taste being a combination of a man's judgment and feelings, there never can be any certainty in the determination of a man whose judgment is not formed. To form the judgment, there is but one method; it is by making comparisons. To compare two objects perfectly, one must understand them both. And hence it follows, that the first step towards acquiring a good taste is knowledge. Without knowledge, no comparison can be formed;

formed; without comparisons, the judgment cannot be chastened; without judgment, there can be no sure taste. An example taken from sculpture will explain this. A young man wants to acquire a taste for sculpture: If Nature has not given him feeling, he seeks an impossibility: If she has given him feeling, he must then acquire knowledge to form his judgment; and this knowledge is to be acquired but by seeing statues. A statue is the imitation of a man or a woman. The first one he sees, he will be able to say whether it resembles a woman or a man; but he will not be able to say whether or no it be a good statue. *Good is a relative term*: it is only by comparing that statue with a number of others he can be able to ascertain its value. Apollo is always represented as a beautiful youth. A hundred sculptors, ancient and modern, have executed this subject. Show a very indifferent one to a young man, another very capital one to another young man; let them be the first statues that either of them have seen, and their judgments upon the two will be probably the same. They will both say that these two statues are fine. He who has seen the indifferent Apollo will be as much charmed as he who has seen the other; and his taste will be equally good. This statue is the best he has ever seen; and he is not to be blamed for admiring it. It is evident now, that this man's taste is

not sure; and it is evident he is born with the means of making it so. Let him then see the Apollo of Girardon, that of Bernini, several others ancient and modern, and let him finish with the Apollo of Belvedere. He will then have seen all that is most perfect in the art. If he examines each of these statues separately with attention, and afterwards compares them together, he will acquire the power of ascertaining the value of each, and of assigning to it its true rank. The knowledge that he has obtained will form his judgment; his judgment will then direct his feelings; and that man will acquire a sure and perfect taste.

SHERLOCK.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

TASTE, taken in its most extensive signification, is, in relation to works, the knowledge of what merits the esteem of mankind. Among the arts and sciences, there are some with regard to which the public adopt the opinion of men of skill, and never of themselves pronounce any judgment; such are, geometry, mechanics, some parts of natural philosophy, and painting. In these arts and sciences, the only men of taste are the persons versed in them; and taste is in these

various kinds only the knowledge of the truly beautiful.

This is not the case with respect to those works of which the public are, or believe themselves to be, judges; as poems, romances, tragedies, moral discourses, politics, &c. In these various kinds, we ought not to understand by taste the exact knowledge of that beauty proper to strike people of all ages and countries; but the more particular knowledge of what pleases in a certain nation. There are two methods of arriving at this knowledge, and consequently two different kinds of taste; such is that of most players, who, by the daily study of the ideas and sentiments proper to please the public, are rendered very good judges of theatrical works, and especially those that resemble the pieces published. The other is a rational taste, founded on a profound knowledge of human nature and the spirit of the age. Then men endowed with this last kind of taste are particularly qualified to judge of original works. He who has only an habitual taste, must be void of taste whenever he is destitute of objects of comparison. But this rational taste, which is doubtless superior to what I call habitual, is only acquired by long study both of the public taste and the art or science in which a person pretends to the title of a man of taste.

Men of letters are not always the best judges of taste,

taste, in that very kind where they have had most success. What, it may be asked, is the cause of this literary phenomenon? To this it may be replied, It is with great writers as with great painters, each has his manner. M. de Crebillon, for instance, sometimes expresses his ideas with a force, a heat, an energy, peculiar to himself; M. de Fontenelle presents them with an order, a clearness, and a turn, remarkably his own; and M. de Voltaire expresses them with an imagination, grandeur, and continued elegance. Now, each of these illustrious men, partial to his own taste, will consider his own manner as the best; and consequently set a greater value on the man of moderate abilities who seizes it, than on the man of genius who has a taste of his own. Hence spring the different judgments often formed on the same work by celebrated writers and the public; who, having no esteem for imitators, would have an author be himself and not another.

HELVETIUS.

TAXES.

THE foundation of the social contract is property; and its first condition, that every one should be maintained in the peaceful possession of what belonged to him. It is true, that by the same treaty every one tacitly consents to be affec-

fed toward the public wants; but this engagement being incapable of hurting the fundamental law, and supposing that the evidence of such wants must appear to every one who contributes to them, it is plain that such assessment, in order to be lawful, should be voluntary; not indeed particularly so, as if it were necessary to have the consent of each individual, and that he should give no more than just what he pleased; but so far voluntary as it should be done by the consent of the majority of the citizens, and upon an equitable and impartial footing.

That taxes cannot be lawfully established but by the consent of the people or their representatives, is a truth generally admitted by all philosophers and civilians of any reputation. If any of them also have established maxims apparently contradictory, their particular motives for it may be easily seen through; and, besides, they introduce so many conditions and restrictions, that the argument comes at the bottom to the very same thing: For whether the people have it in their power to refuse, or the sovereign ought not to exact, is a matter of indifference with regard to right; and if the point in question be only with regard to power, it is mighty useless to inquire whether it be lawful or not.

We are told in the Spirit of Laws, that a capitation tax is most conformable to slavery, and a
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real tax most agreeable to liberty. It might indeed be so, if the circumstances of every person were equal; for otherwise nothing can be more disproportionate than such a tax, and it is in the observations of exact proportions that consists the spirit of liberty. But if a capitation tax were exactly proportioned to the state and circumstances of individuals, it would be the most equitable, and of consequence the most conformable, of all others to freemen.

These proportions appear at first very easy to be observed; because, as they relate to the rank which every one holds in life, the indications of it are always public: but it is rare that a proper regard is paid to all the elements that should enter into such a calculation, setting aside the deception arising from avarice, fraud, and interest. In the first place, should be considered the relation of quantities; according to which, every thing else being equal, the person who has ten times the property of another man ought to pay ten times as much to the state. Secondly, the relation of custom, that is to say, the distinction between necessities and superfluities. He who possesses only the common necessities of life should pay nothing at all, while the tax on him who is in possession of superfluities might be justly extended to every thing beyond mere necessities. To this the latter will possibly object, in regard to his

rank, that what may be superfluous to a man of inferior station is necessary to him. But this is false; for a peer of the realm has two legs as well as a cow-herd, and he has but one belly any more than the clown. Besides, these pretended necessities are really so little necessary with regard to rank, that if he should renounce them on any worthy occasion, he would only be the more honoured and respected. The populace would be ready to adore a minister who would walk to council on foot, because he sold off his equipage to supply a pressing exigence of state.

A third relation, which is never accounted any thing, and which ought to be accounted the chief, is the utility which every person derives from the social confederacy; which powerfully protects the immense possessions of the rich, and hardly leaves the poor the quiet possession of the cottage he builds with his own hands. Almost all the advantages of society are for the rich and powerful. All the lucrative employments are in their hands; all the privileges and exemptions are reserved for them alone, while the public authority is ever partial in their favour. There is another remark no less important, which is, that the losses of the poor are much less reparable than those of the rich; and that the difficulty of acquisition always increases in proportion to the necessity

necessity of it. *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, is as true in politics as in physics. Money is the seed of money; and the first guinea is sometimes more difficult to be acquired than the second million. Add to all this, that what is paid by the poor is for ever lost to them, and remains in, or returns to, the hands of the rich: and as among those only who share in the government or their dependents, sooner or later all the produce of the taxes must pass; so in paying their share they have always a sensible interest in augmenting them. Putting all these considerations carefully together, we shall find, that, in order to levy taxes in a truly equitable and proportionable manner, the tax ought not to be in the simple ratio of the property of the contributors, but in a ratio compounded of the difference of their conditions and the superfluity of their possessions.

ROUSSEAU.

TAXES, THEIR SOURCES AND PROPERTIES.

THE private revenue of individuals arises ultimately from three different sources; *rent*, *profit*, and *wages*. Every tax must finally be paid from some one or other of those three different sorts of revenue, or from all of them indifferently.

ly. The four following maxims, with regard to taxes in general, seem to be essential.

1. The subjects of every state ought to contribute towards the support of the government, as nearly as possible, in proportion to their respective abilities; that is, in proportion to the revenue which they respectively enjoy under the protection of the state. The expence of government to the individuals of a great nation, is like the expence of management to the joint tenants of a great estate, who are all obliged to contribute in proportion to their respective interests in the estate. In the observation or neglect of this maxim consists, what is called the equality or inequality of taxation. Every tax, it must be observed once for all, which falls finally upon only one of the three sorts of revenue above-mentioned, is necessarily unequal, in so far as it does not affect the other two.

2. The tax which each individual is bound to pay ought to be certain, and not arbitrary. The time of payment, the manner of payment, the quantity to be paid, ought all to be clear and plain to the contributor, and to every other person. Where it is otherwise, every person subject to the tax is put more or less in the power of the tax-gatherer; who can either aggravate the tax upon any obnoxious contributor, or extort, by the terror of such aggravation, some present or perquisite

quisite to himself. The uncertainty of taxation encourages the insolence and favours the corruption of an order of men who are naturally unpopular, even where they are neither insolent nor corrupt. The certainty of what each individual ought to pay is, in taxation, a matter of so great importance, that a very considerable degree of inequality, it appears, I believe, from the experience of all nations, is not near so great an evil as a very small degree of uncertainty.

3. Every tax ought to be levied at the time, or in the manner in which it is most likely to be convenient for the contributor to pay it. A tax upon the rent of land or of houses, payable at the same term at which such rents are usually paid, is levied at the time when it is most likely to be convenient for the contributor to pay; or when he is most likely to have wherewithal to pay. Taxes upon such consumable goods as are articles of luxury, are all finally paid by the consumer, and generally in a manner that is very convenient for him. He pays them by little and little, as he has occasion to buy the goods. As he is at liberty, too, either to buy or not to buy as he pleases, it must be his own fault if he ever suffers any considerable inconveniency from such taxes.

4. Every tax ought to be so contrived as both to take out and to keep out of the pockets of the people

people as little as possible, over and above what it brings into the public treasury of the state.

A tax may either take out or keep out of the pockets of the people a great deal more than it brings into the public treasury, in the four following ways. First, the levying of it may require a great number of officers, whose salaries may eat up the greater part of the produce of the tax, and whose perquisites may impose another additional tax upon the people. Secondly, it may obstruct the industry of the people, and discourage them from applying to certain branches of business which might give maintenance and employment to great multitudes. While it obliges the people to pay, it may thus diminish, or perhaps destroy, some of the funds which might enable them more easily to do so. Thirdly, by the forfeitures and other penalties which those unfortunate individuals incur who attempt unsuccessfully to evade the tax, it may frequently ruin them, and thereby put an end to the benefit which the community might have received from the employment of their capitals. An injudicious tax offers a great temptation to smuggling: But the penalties of smuggling must rise in proportion to the temptation. The law, contrary to all the ordinary principles of justice, first creates the temptation, and then punishes those who yield to it; and it commonly enhances

enhances the punishment too in proportion to the very circumstance which ought certainly to alleviate it, the temptation to commit the crime. Fourthly, by subjecting the people to the frequent visits and the odious examination of the tax-gatherers, it may expose them to much unnecessary trouble, vexation, and oppression; and though vexation is not, strictly speaking, expence, it is certainly equivalent to the expence at which every man would be willing to redeem himself from it. It is in some one or other of these four different ways that taxes are frequently so much more burdensome to the people than they are beneficial to the sovereign.

The evident justice and utility of the foregoing maxims have recommended them more or less to the attention of all nations. All nations have endeavoured, to the best of their judgment, to render their taxes as equal as they could contrive; as certain as convenient to the contributor, both in the time and in the mode of payment; and, in proportion to the revenue which they brought to the prince, as little burdensome to the people.

A. SMITH.

HEARSAY TESTIMONY.

HEARSAY is a testimony weakened by its removal from the first source; it is liable from its
very

very nature to important objections, which generally diminish its authority. Very few persons impose on themselves such strict laws of veracity, that every word which drops from them in conversation can be regarded as a judicial testimony. Vanity, self-interest, love of talkativeness, a variety of motives, even the most frivolous, make people indulge themselves in fictions; and they think themselves the more secure, both as a detection is not attended with any important consequences, and as their companions never dream of sifting their story, or examining circumstances so as to render their detection possible.

— LORD MANSFIELD.

HUMAN TESTIMONY.

THERE is no species of reasoning more common, more useful, and even necessary to human life, than that derived from the testimony of men, and the reports of eye-witnesses and spectators. Our assurance, in any argument of this kind, is derived from no other principle than our observation of the veracity of human testimony, and of the usual conformity of facts to the reports of witnesses. Were not the memory tenacious to a certain degree; were not men, in general, inclined to truth and probity; were they not sensible to shame, when detected in a falsehood;

were not these qualities discovered by *experience* to be inherent in human nature, we should never repose confidence in human testimony. And as the evidence derived from human testimony is founded on past experience; so it varies with the experience, and is regarded either as a *proof* or a *probability*, according as the conjunction between any particular kind of report and any kind of objects has been found to be constant or variable. Where this experience is not entirely uniform on any side, it is attended with an unavoidable contrariety in our judgments, with the same opposition and mutual destruction of arguments as in every other kind of evidence. We hesitate; we balance opposite circumstances; and incline to that side on which we discover a superiority, but with a diminution of assurance in proportion to the force of its antagonist. This contrariety of evidence may originate from various causes; from the opposition of contrary testimony; from the character or number of the witnesses; from the manner of their delivering their testimony; or from the union of all these circumstances. We suspect a matter of fact when the witnesses contradict each other; when they are but few, or of a suspicious character; when they have an interest in what they affirm; when they deliver their testimony with doubt and hesitation; or, on the contrary, with too violent asseverations, &c.

If the fact, which the testimony endeavours to establish, partake of the extraordinary and marvellous, the evidence is more or less credible in proportion as the fact is more or less unusual. The reason why we place any credit in witnesses and historians, is not derived from any connection which we perceive *a priori* between testimony and reality, but because we are accustomed to find a conformity between them. But when the fact attested is such a one as has seldom fallen under our observation, here is a contest of two opposite experiences. Experience, which gives us a certain degree of assurance in the testimony of witnesses, gives us also, in this case, another degree of assurance against the fact to be established; from which contradiction there necessarily arises a counterpoise, a mutual destruction of belief and authority. If the fact affirmed be really miraculous, and the testimony, considered apart and in itself, amount to an entire proof; in that case, there is proof against proof, of which the most forcible must prevail; but still with a diminution of its force in proportion to that of its antagonist. When any one tells me he saw a dead man restored to life, I immediately consider with myself whether it be more probable that this person should either deceive or be deceived; or that the fact which he relates should really have happened. I weigh the one miracle against the

the other; and according to the superiority which I discover, I pronounce my decision, and always reject the greater miracle. If the falsehood of his testimony would be more miraculous than the event which he relates, then, and not till then, can he pretend to command my belief or opinion. But there is not to be found, in all history, any miracle to be attested by a sufficient number of men, of such unquestioned good-sense, education, and learning, as to secure us against all delusion in themselves; of such undoubted integrity, as to place them beyond all suspicion of any design to deceive others; of such credit and reputation in the eyes of mankind, as to have a great deal to lose in case of being detected in any falsehood; and at the same time, attesting facts, performed in such a public manner, and in so celebrated a part of the world, as to render the detection unavoidable: all which circumstances are requisite to give us full assurance in the testimony of men.

HUME.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

THE judgment must be employed to discern the truth or falsehood of assertions, by attending to the credibility and consistency of the different parts of the story; the veracity and character of witnesses in other respects; by comparing the as-

sertions with accounts received from other witnesses, who could not be ignorant of the same facts; and, lastly, by bringing the whole to the test of a comparison with known and admitted facts.

LORD MANSFIELD.

THEOCRACY.

IT seems the greater part of the ancient nations were governed by a kind of theocracy. To begin by India, you there find the Bramins have long been sovereigns: in Persia, the Magi have the greatest authority. The story of Smerdis's ears may very probably be a fable; but it will always follow that he was a Magus upon the throne of Cyrus. Several Egyptian priests had so great a dominion over their kings, that they went so far as to prescribe to them how much they should eat and drink, brought up their children, tried them after their deaths, and often made themselves kings.

If we come down to the Greeks, however fabulous their history may be, do we not learn therefrom, that the prophet Chalcas had sufficient power in the army to sacrifice the daughter of the king of kings? Come still lower to the savage nations since the Greeks, the Druids governed the Gauls.

It does not seem to have been possible, that in
the

the first colonies there could have been any other than a theocratic government: for as soon as a nation has chosen a tutelar god, this god has priests; these priests reign over the minds of the people; they cannot govern but in the name of the god: they, therefore, always make him speak; they retell his oracles; and it is by an express order from god that every thing is done.

China is the only one of all the ancient states which has not been under sacerdotal subjection. As to the Japanese, they submitted to the laws imposed upon them by a priest six hundred years before we were in being. Almost every where theocracy is so much established, so deeply rooted, that the first histories are those of gods, who became incarnated to come and govern men. The gods, said the people of Thebes and Memphis, have reigned twelve thousand years in Egypt.

Brama incarnated himself to reign in India, Samonosodom at Siam, the god Adad governed Syria, the goddess Cybele had been sovereign of Phrygia, Jupiter of Crète, Saturn of Greece and Italy. The same spirit runs through all these fables; it consists in a confused idea which men had, that the gods formerly descended on earth.

VOLTAIRE.

THEOLOGY.

IN the ancient philosophy, the perfection of virtue was represented as necessarily productive, to the person who possessed it, of the most perfect happiness in this life. In the modern philosophy, it was frequently represented as generally, or rather as almost always, inconsistent with any degree of happiness in this life; and heaven was to be earned only by penance and mortification, by the austerities and abasement of a monk; not by the liberal, generous, and spirited conduct of a man. Casuistry and an ascetic morality made up, in most cases, the greater part of the moral philosophy of the schools. By far the most important of all the different branches of philosophy became in this manner by far the most corrupted.

Such, therefore, was the common course of philosophical education in the greater part of the universities in Europe. Logic was taught first; ontology came in the second place; pneumatology, comprehending the doctrine concerning the nature of the human soul and of the Deity, in the third; in the fourth followed a debased system of moral philosophy, which was considered as immediately connected with the doctrines of pneuma-

pneumatology, with the immortality of the human soul, and with the rewards and punishments which, from the justice of the Deity, were to be expected in a life to come: A short and superficial system of physics usually concluded the course.

A. SMITH.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

SOME have doubted whether the science of God, or theology, be in fact a science. All science, they say, supposes a series of observations. Now, what observations can be made on a Being that is invisible and incomprehensible? Theology therefore is no science. In fact, what do we understand by the word God? The unknown cause of order and motion. Now, what can we say of an unknown cause? If we attach other ideas to the word God, we shall fall, as Mr. Robinet has shown, into a thousand contradictions. No one doubts, say the Chinese Letters, that there is in nature a *ruling power, though he is ignorant what it is*: but when we conjecture the nature of this unknown power, *the creation of a God is then nothing more than the deification of human ignorance*. I do not entirely agree with these Letters, though I am forced to own with them, that theology, the science of God, or the

Incom-

Incomprehensible, is not a separate science. What then is theology? I do not know.

HELVETIUS.

THINKING IS THE ACTION, NOT THE
ESSENCE, OF THE SOUL.

THAT there are ideas, some or other, always present in the mind of a waking man, every one's experience convinces him; though the mind employs itself about them with several degrees of attention. Sometimes the mind fixes itself with so much earnestness on the contemplation of some objects, that it turns their ideas on all sides, remarks their relations and circumstances, and views every part so nicely, and with such intention, that it shuts out all other thoughts, and takes no notice of the ordinary impression made then on the senses, which at another season would produce very sensible perceptions; at other times it barely observes the train of ideas that succeed in the understanding, without directing and pursuing any of them; and at other times, it lets them pass almost quite unregarded, as faint shadows that make no impression.

This difference of *intention* and *remission* of the mind in thinking, with a great variety of degrees between earnest study and very near minding nothing at all, every one, I think, has experienced.

ced in himself. Trace it a little further, and you find the mind asleep, retired as it were from the senses, and out of the reach of those motions made on the organs of sense, which at other times produce very vivid and sensible ideas. I need not seek for this instance in those who sleep out whole stormy nights without hearing the thunder, or seeing the lightning, or feeling the shaking of the house, which are sensible enough to those who are waking. But in this retirement of the mind from the senses, it often retains a yet more loose and incoherent manner of *thinking*, which we call dreaming: And last of all, sound sleep closes the scene quite, and puts an end to all appearances. This, I think, almost every one has experience of in himself; and his own observation without difficulty leads him thus far. That which I would further conclude from hence, is, that since the mind can sensibly put on, at several times, several degrees of thinking; and be, sometimes even in a waking man, so remiss as to have thoughts dim and obscure to that degree that they are very little removed from none at all; and at last in the dark retirements of sound sleep loses the sight perfectly of all *ideas* whatsoever: since, I say, this is evidently so in matter of fact and constant experience, I ask, Whether it be not probable, that thinking is the action, and not the essence of the soul? Since the operations of agents will easily admit

admit of intention and remission; but the essences of things are not conceived capable of any such variation. LOCKE.

REFLECTIONS ON THE GOOD OLD TIME.

FROM whence can proceed the frenzy of exalting the past ages at the expence of blackening the age in which we live?—Undoubtedly from self-love, which finds a double satisfaction in this conduct: first, from the comparison which we form between ourselves and the men whom we condemn; and, secondly, from that still more strikingly marked superiority, which assigns to us a knowledge of preceding times, whilst we appear in some measure to assimilate with them, by pronouncing their eulogy. We apply to antiquify those ideas which we have entertained of consanguinity. The eldest imagine themselves more nearly related to it by a degree; they lay claim to a share of its honours, and cry it up before the rising generation. We are but seldom jealous of the virtues of our ancestors: by knowing them, we suppose ourselves to be more enlightened; by praising them, we conceive that we are more wise. On the contrary, we are dazzled by the virtues of our own age, and seem afraid of facing them.

CHATELLUR.

TITHES.

THE ORIGIN OF TITHES IN ENGLAND.

THE Ecclesiastics, in the reign of Ethelwolf the father of Alfred the Great; made very rapid advances in the acquisition of power and grandeur: and in those days of ignorance, inculcating the most absurd and most interested doctrines, though they met sometimes, from the contrary interests of the laity, with an opposition which it required time and address to overcome, they found no obstacle in their reason and understanding.—Not content with the donations of land made them by the Saxon princes and nobles, and with the temporary oblations from the devotion of the people, they had cast a wishful eye on a vast revenue, which they claimed as belonging to them by a divine, indefeasible, and inherent title.—However little versed in the Scriptures, they had been able to discover, that the priests, under the Jewish law possessed a tenth of all the produce of land; and, forgetting what they themselves taught, that the moral part only of that law was obligatory on Christians, they insisted, that this donation was a perpetual property conferred by heaven on those who officiated at the altar.—During some centuries, the whole scope of sermons and homilies was directed to this purpose; and one would have imagined, from the general tenor of these

these discourses, that all the practical parts of Christianity were comprehended in the exact and faithful payment of tithes to the Clergy.—Encouraged by their success in inculcating these doctrines, they ventured further than they were warranted even by the Levitical law, and pretended to draw the tenth of all industry, merchandize, wages of labourers, and pay of soldiers; nay, some canonists went so far as to affirm, that the clergy were entitled to the tithe of the profits made by courtezans in the exercise of their profession.—Though parishes had been instituted in England by Honorius Archbishop of Canterbury near two centuries before, the ecclesiastics had never been able to get possession of the tithes; and they therefore seized the favourable opportunity of making that acquisition, when a weak, superstitious prince was on the throne, and when the people, discouraged by their losses from the Danes, and terrified with the fear of future invasions, were susceptible of any impression which bore the appearance of religion. HUME.

THE UNIVERSAL SPIRIT OF TOLERATION IN ANCIENT ROME.

THE policy of the emperors and the senate of Rome, as far as it concerned religion, was happily seconded by the reflections of the enlighten-

ed, and by the habits of the superstitious part of their subjects. The various modes of worship which prevailed in the Roman world, were all considered by the people as equally true; by the philosopher as equally false; and by the magistrate as equally useful: and thus toleration produced not only mutual indulgence, but even religious concord.—The superstition of the people was not embittered by any mixture of theological rancour, nor was it confined by the chains of any speculative system. The devout Polytheist, though fondly attached to his national rites, admitted with implicit faith the different religions of the earth. Fear, gratitude, and curiosity, a dream or an omen, a singular disorder, or a distant journey, perpetually disposed him to multiply the articles of his belief, and to enlarge the list of his protectors. The thin texture of the Pagan mythology was interwoven with various but not discordant materials. As soon as it was allowed that sages and heroes, who had lived or who had died for the benefit of their country, were exalted to a state of power and immortality, it was universally confessed that they deserved, if not the adoration, at least the reverence of mankind. The deities of a thousand groves, and a thousand streams, possessed, in peace, their local and respective influence; nor could the Roman who deprecated the wrath of the Tiber, deride the Egyp-

tian who presented his offering to the beneficent genius of the Nile. The visible powers of nature, the planets and the elements, were the same throughout the universe. The invisible governors of the moral world were inevitably cast in a similar mould of fiction and allegory. Every virtue, and even vice, acquired its divine representative; every art and profession its patron, whose attributes, in the most distant ages and countries, were uniformly derived from the character of their peculiar votaries. A republic of gods of such opposite tempers and interests required in every system, the moderating hand of a supreme magistrate; who, by the progress of knowledge and flattery, was gradually invested with the sublime perfections of an eternal parent and an omnipotent monarch. Such was the mild spirit of antiquity, that the nations were less attentive to the difference, than to the resemblance, of their religious worship. The Greek, the Roman, and the Barbarian, as they met before their respective altars, easily persuaded themselves, that under various names, and with various ceremonies, they adored the same deities. The elegant mythology of Homer gave a beautiful, and almost a regular form, to the polytheism of the ancient world.

The philosophers of Greece deduced their morals from the nature of man, rather than from that of God. They meditated, however, on the
divine

divine nature as a very curious and important speculation; and in the profound inquiry, they displayed the strength and weakness of the human understanding. Of the four most celebrated schools, the Stoics and the Platonists endeavoured to reconcile the jarring interests of reason and piety. They have left us the most sublime proofs of the existence and perfections of the first Cause; but, as it was impossible for them to conceive the creation of matter, the workman in the Stoic philosophy was not sufficiently distinguished from the work; whilst, on the contrary, the spiritual God of Plato and his disciples resembled an idea rather than a substance. The opinions of the Academics and Epicureans were of a less religious cast; but whilst the modest science of the former induced them to doubt, the positive ignorance of the latter urged them to deny the Providence of a Supreme Ruler. The spirit of inquiry, prompted by emulation, and supported by freedom, had divided the public teachers of philosophy into a variety of contending sects; but the ingenious youth, who, from every part, resorted to Athens, and the other seats of learning in the Roman empire, were alike instructed in every school to reject and despise the religion of the multitude. How, indeed, was it possible, that a philosopher should accept, as divine truths, the idle tales of the poets, and the incoherent traditions of anti-

quity; or that he should adore as gods those imperfect beings whom he must have despised as men! Against such unworthy adversaries Cicero condescended to employ the arms of reason and eloquence; but the satire of Lucian was a much more adequate, as well as efficacious weapon. We may be well assured, that a writer conversant with the world, would never have ventured to expose the gods of his country to public ridicule, had they not already been the objects of secret contempt among the polished and enlightened orders of society.

Notwithstanding the fashionable irreligion which prevailed in the age of the Antonines, both the interest of the priests, and the credulity of the people, were sufficiently respected. In their writings and conversation, the philosophers of antiquity asserted the independent dignity of reason; but they resigned their actions to the commands of law and of custom. Viewing with a smile of pity and indulgence the various errors of the vulgar, they diligently practised the ceremonies of their fathers; devoutly frequented the temples of the gods; and sometimes condescending to get a part on the theatre of superstition, they concealed the sentiments of an Atheist under the sacerdotal robes. Reasoners of such a temper were scarcely inclined to wrangle about their respective modes of faith and worship. It

was

was indifferent to them what shape the folly of the multitude might choose to assume; and they approached, with the same inward contempt, and the same external reverence, the altars of the Libyan, the Olympian, or the Capitoline Jupiter. It is not easy to conceive from what motives a spirit of persecution could introduce itself into the Roman counsels. The magistrate could not be actuated by a blind, though honest bigotry, since the magistrates were philosophers, and the schools of Athens had given laws to the senate. They could not be impelled by ambition or avarice, as the temporal and ecclesiastical powers were united in the same hands. The pontiffs were chosen among the most illustrious of the senators; and the office of supreme pontiff was constantly exercised by the emperors themselves. They knew and valued the advantages of religion as it is connected with civil government. They encouraged the public festivals, which humanize the manners of the people. They managed the arts of divination as a convenient instrument of policy; and they respected, as the firmest bond of society, the useful persuasion, that either in this or in a future life, the crime of perjury is most assuredly punished by the avenging gods. But whilst they acknowledged the general advantages of religion, they were, convinced, that the various modes of worship contributed alike to the same

salutary purposes; and that in every country, the form of superstition which had received the sanction of time and experience, was the best adapted to the climate and to its inhabitants. Avarice and taste very frequently despoiled the vanquished nations of the elegant statues of their gods, and the rich ornaments of their temples: but in the exercise of the religion which they derived from their ancestors, they uniformly experienced the indulgence, and even protection, of the Roman conquerors. The province of Gaul seems, and indeed only seems, an exception to this universal toleration. Under the specious pretext of abolishing human sacrifices, the emperors Tiberius and Claudius suppressed the dangerous power of the Druids: but the priests themselves, their gods, and their altars, subsisted in peaceful obscurity till the final destruction of Paganism.—Rome, the capital of a great monarchy, was incessantly filled with strangers and subjects from every part of the world, who all introduced and enjoyed the favourite superstitions of their native country. Every city in the empire was justified in maintaining the purity of its ancient ceremonies; and the Roman senate, using the common privilege, sometimes interposed to check this inundation of foreign rites. The Egyptian superstition, of all the most contemptible and abject, was frequently prohibited; the temples of Serapis

pis and Isis demolished, and their worshippers banished from Rome and Italy. But the zeal of fanaticism prevailed over the cold and feeble efforts of policy. The exiles returned, the proselytes multiplied, the temples were restored with increasing splendor, and Isis and Serapis assumed their place among the Roman deities. Nor was this indulgence a departure from the usual maxims of government. In the purest ages of the commonwealth, Cybele and Æsculapius had been invited by solemn embassies; and it was customary to tempt the protectors of besieged cities, by promise of more distinguished honours than they possessed in their native country. Rome gradually became the common temple of her subjects; and the freedom of the city was bestowed on all the gods of mankind.

GIBBON.

REASONS FOR AND AGAINST TOLERATION.

THE practice of persecution is the scandal of all religion; and the theological animosity, so fierce and violent, far from being an argument of mens conviction in their opposite tenets, is a certain proof of the contrary; and they have never reached any serious persuasion with regard to these remote and sublime subjects.—Even those who are

are the most impatient of contradiction in other controversies, are mild and moderate in comparison of polemical divines; and wherever a man's knowledge and experience give him a perfect assurance of his own opinion, he regards with contempt, rather than anger, the opposition and mistakes of others.—But while men zealously maintain what they neither clearly comprehend, nor entirely believe, they are shaken in their imagined faith by the opposite persuasion or even doubts of other men; and vent on their antagonists that impatience which is the natural result of so disagreeable a state of the understanding. They then embrace easily any pretence for representing opponents as impious and profane; and if they can also find a colour for connecting this violence with the interests of civil government, they can no longer be restrained from giving uncontrouled scope to vengeance and resentment.—But surely never enterprise was more unfortunate than that of founding persecution on policy, or endeavouring, for the sake of peace, to settle an entire uniformity of opinion, in questions which, of all others, are least subjected to the criterion of human reason.—The universal and uncontradicted prevalence of one opinion in religious subjects, can only be owing at first to the stupid ignorance and barbarism of the people, who never indulge themselves in any speculation and inquiry; and there

is no other expedient for maintaining that uniformity, so fondly sought after, but by banishing for ever all curiosity and all improvement in science and cultivation.—It may not appear, indeed, difficult to check, by a steady severity, the first beginnings of controversy; but besides that this policy exposes for ever the people to all the abject terrors of superstition, and the magistrate to the endless encroachments of ecclesiastics, it also renders men so delicate, that they can never endure to hear of opposition; and they will sometimes pay dearly for that false tranquillity in which they have been so long indulged.—As healthful bodies are ruined by too nice a regimen, and are thereby rendered incapable of bearing the unavoidable incidents of human life, a people who never were allowed to imagine that their principles could be contested, fly out into the most outrageous violence when any event (and such events are common) produces a faction among their clergy, and gives rise to any difference in tenet or opinion.—But whatever may be said in favour of suppressing, by persecution, the first beginnings of heresy, no solid argument can be alleged for extending severity towards multitudes, or endeavouring, by capital punishments, to extirpate an opinion which has diffused itself through men of every rank and station.—Besides the extreme barbarity of such an attempt, it proves commonly ineffectual

tual to the purpose intended; and serves only to make men more obstinate in their persuasion, and to increase the number of their proselytes.—The melancholy with which the fear of death, torture, and persecution inspires the sectaries, is the proper disposition for fostering religious zeal; the prospect of eternal rewards, when brought near, overpowers the dread of eternal punishments: the glory of martyrdom stimulates all the more furious zealots, especially the leaders and preachers: where a violent animosity is excited by oppression, men pass naturally from hating the persons of their tyrants, to a more violent abhorrence of their doctrines; and the spectators, moved with pity towards these supposed martyrs, are naturally seduced to embrace those principles which can inspire men with a constancy that appears almost supernatural.—Open the door to toleration, the mutual hatred relaxes among the sectaries; their attachment to their particular religion decays; the common occupations and pleasures of life succeed to the acrimony of disputation; and the same man who in other circumstances would have braved flames and tortures, is engaged to change his religion from the smallest prospect of favour and advancement, or even the frivolous hopes of becoming more fashionable in his principles.—If any exception can be admitted to this maxim of toleration, it will only be where a theology

logy altogether new, nowise connected with the ancient religion of the state, is imported from foreign countries, and may easily, at one blow, be eradicated without leaving the seeds of future innovations.—But as this instance would involve some apology for the ancient Pagan persecutions, or for the extirpation of Christianity in China and Japan; it ought surely, on account of this detested consequence, to be rather buried in eternal silence and oblivion, especially as no human depravity can equal revenge and cruelty covered with the mantle of religion.

Though these arguments appear entirely satisfactory, yet such is the subtilty of human wit, that the enemies to toleration are not reduced to silence; and they still find topics on which to maintain the controversy. The doctrine, say they, of liberty of conscience, is founded on the most flagrant impiety, and supposes such an indifference among all religions, such an obscurity in theological doctrines, as to render the church and magistrate incapable of distinguishing, with certainty, the dictates of Heaven from the mere fictions of human imagination. If the Divinity reveals principles to mankind, he will surely give a criterion by which they may be ascertained; and a prince, who knowingly allows these principles to be perverted or adulterated, is infinitely more criminal than if he gave

gave permission for the vending of poison, under the shape of food, to all his subjects. Persecution may, indeed, seem better calculated to make hypocrites than converts; but experience teaches us, that the habits of hypocrisy often turn into reality; and the children, at least, ignorant of the dissimulation of their parents, may happily be educated in more orthodox tenets. It is absurd, in opposition to considerations of such unspeakable importance, to plead the temporal and frivolous interests of civil society; and if matters be thoroughly examined, even that topic will not appear so universally certain in favour of toleration as by some it is represented. Where sects arise, whose fundamental principle on all sides is to execrate, and abhor, and damn, and extirpate each other, what choice has the magistrate left but to take part, and by rendering one sect entirely prevalent, restore, at least for a time, the public tranquillity? The political body, being here sickly, must not be treated as if it were in a state of sound health; and an affected neutrality in the prince, or even a cool preference, may serve only to encourage the hopes of all the sects, and keep alive their animosity. The Protestants, far from tolerating the religion of their ancestors, regard it as an impious and detestable idolatry; and during the late minority, when they were entirely masters, they enacted very severe, though not ca-

pital, punishments against all exercise of the Catholic worship, and even against such as barely abstained from their profane rites and sacraments. Nor are instances wanting of their endeavours to secure an imagined orthodoxy by the most rigorous executions: Calvin has burned Servetus at Geneva; Cranmer brought Arians and Anabaptists to the stake: And if persecution of any kind be admitted, the most bloody and violent will surely be allowed the most justifiable, as the most effectual. Imprisonments, fines, confiscations, whippings, serve only to irritate the sects, without disabling them from resistance: but the stake, the wheel, and the gibbet, must soon terminate in the extirpation or banishment of all the heretics inclined to give disturbance, and in the entire silence and submission of the rest.

HOME.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

A hierarchy, moderate in its acquisitions of power and riches, may safely grant a toleration to sectaries; and the more it abates the fervor of innovators by lenity and liberty, the more securely will it possess those advantages which the legal establishments bestow upon it.—But where superstition has raised a church to such an exorbitant height as that of Rome, persecution is less the re-

sult of bigotry in the priests than of a necessary policy; and the rigour of law is the only method of repelling the attacks of men, who, besides religious zeal, have so many other motives, derived both from public and private interest, to engage them on the side of innovation.—But though such overgrown hierarchies may long support themselves by these violent expedients, the time comes, when severities tend only to enrage the new sectaries, and make them break through all bounds of reason and moderation.—This is the necessary progress of human affairs, and the operation of those principles which are inherent in human nature.

HUME.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

IF we look back into history for the character of the present sects of Christianity, we shall find few that have not in their turns been persecutors and complainers of persecution. The primitive Christians thought persecution extremely wrong in the Pagans, but practised it on one another. The first Protestants of the church of England blamed persecution in the Romish church, but practised it against the Puritans: these found it wrong in the bishops, but fell into the same practice both at home and in New England. To account for this, we should remember that the doctrine

trine of toleration was not then known, or had not prevailed in the world. Persecution was not therefore so much the fault of the sect as of the times. It was not in those days deemed wrong in itself. The general opinion was only, that those who are in an error ought not to persecute the truth: but the possessors of truth were in the right to persecute error, in order to destroy it. Thus every sect, believing itself possessed of all truth, and that every tenet differing from their's was error, conceived, that when the power was in their hands, persecution was a duty required of them by that God whom they supposed to be offended by heresy. By degrees, more moderate and more modest sentiments have taken place in the Christian world; and among Protestants particularly, all disclaim persecution, none vindicate it, and few practise it. Toleration in religion, though obvious to common understanding, was not, however, the production of reason, but of commerce. The advantage of toleration for promoting commerce was discovered long before by the Portuguese. They were too zealous Catholics to venture so bold a measure in Portugal, but it was permitted in Goa; and the inquisition in that town was confined to Roman Catholics.

FRANKLIN.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

WHERE shall we find the rule to measure the merit of any particular religion?—Unless we could give all men the same constitutions of body and mind; the same educations, tempers, and talents, we shall in vain expect any general agreement on this subject. Since, then, this diversity of judgment is a circumstance in the nature of things unavoidable, it seems to be alike repugnant to Christianity and common sense, to load any man with obloquy and invective, who happens to differ from us in opinion upon that subject. God, who alone knows the hearts of men, and the extent of their abilities, can estimate the strength of the intellectual faculties, and the force of the natural propensities of each individual; and he alone is the only judge how far any person is in a wilful error. But it is unquestionably the duty and interest of mankind, instead of polluting their principles, and provoking their opponents, by calumnies and reproaches; instead of fancying their tenets alone are accompanied with moral rectitude and wisdom, to distrust their own opinions, to be ready to hear those of others with good temper, and a liberal disposition; to abate in non-essentials a little of their firmness; to make mutual concessions, and thereby to preserve inviolate the

the peace of civil society, and the bond of Christian charity unbroken.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

IT is universally true, that where the magistrate has the greatest pretence for interfering in religious and moral principles, his interference (supposing there was no impropriety in it) is the least necessary. If the opinions and principles in question be evidently subversive of all religion and society, they must be evidently false and easy to refute; so that there can be no danger of their spreading, and the patrons of them may safely be suffered to maintain them in the most open manner they choose. The religious and moral principles, perhaps the most destructive to society, are, That there is no God; and, That there is no faith to be kept with heretics. But surely these principles are too absurd to be formidable and alarming; they can have no terrors, but what an ill-judged opposition may give them. Persecution may procure friends to any cause, and perhaps to this; but hardly any thing else can do it. It is a fact, that there are more Atheists and Infidels of all kinds in Roman Catholic states, where religion is so well guarded, than in England. If ever arbitrary power should gain ground in England, it will, be by means of the seeming necessity

sity of having recourse to illegal methods in order to come at opinions, or persons, generally obnoxious: but when these illegal practices have once been authoris'd, and have pass'd into precedents, all persons, and all opinions, will lie at the mercy of the minister, who will animadvert upon whatever gives him umbrage. This is the method in which despotism has generally been introduced, and is well known to have been the method us'd by the thirty tyrants at Athens. They first cut off persons the most generally obnoxious, and such as the laws could not reach; and that intelligent people were not aware, that the very same methods might be employ'd to take off the worthiest men in the city. Such is the connection and gradation of opinions, that if once we admit there are some which ought to be guarded by civil penalties, it will ever be impossible to distinguish, to general satisfaction, between those which may be tolerat'd, and those which may not: But a happy circumstance it is for human society, that in religion and morals, there is no necessity to distinguish them at all; the more important will guard themselves by their own evidence, and the less important do not deserve to be guarded. In all modes of religion which subsist among mankind, however subversive of virtue they may be in theory, there is some salvo for good morals; so that, in fact, they enforce the
more

more essential parts, at least, of that conduct which the good order of society requires. When, under pretence of conscience, men disturb the peace of society, and are guilty of a breach of the laws, they ought to be restrained by the civil magistrate. If a man commit murder, let him be punished as a murderer, and let no regard be paid to the plea of conscience for committing the act; but let not the opinion which led to the act be meddled with.

PRIESTLEY.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

GOVERNMENTS are the judges of actions and not of opinions. If faith be a gift of Heaven, they who have it not, deserve to be pitied; not punished. It is the excess of inhumanity to persecute an unfortunate person. If I advance a gross error, I am punished by ridicule and contempt; but if in consequence of an erroneous opinion I attempt to violate the liberty of other people, it is then I become criminal. If, being a devout adorer of Venus, I burn the temple of Serapis, the magistrate ought to punish me; not as a heretic, but as a disturber of the public peace; as a man unjust, who being free in the exercise of my own worship, would deprive my fellow-citizens of the liberty I enjoy myself.—Wherever several

re-

religions and several sects are tolerated, they become insensibly habituated to each other; their zeal loses every day something of its acrimony. Where a full toleration is established there are few fanatics.

HELYETIUS.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

FREEDOM of thought will never become general and popular, unless the magistrate, who is naturally the inspector of every thing that is of such public notoriety as to influence the police, should recover, in the Christian world, the rights that originally belonged to him. Doctrines, either of theory or practice, are for this reason subject to the control of government; whose power, as well as duty, is however confined to the restraining of what is injurious to the happiness of the community, and to the permitting of every thing that does not disturb the peace and union of mankind.

All states ought to have nearly the same moral system of religious duties; and leave the rest, not to be disputed between men, because that ought to be prevented whenever public tranquillity is disturbed by it, but to the impulse of every man's conscience; thus allowing divines as well as philosophers an entire freedom of thinking. This
unlimited

unlimited toleration, with regard to all tenets and opinions that should not affect the moral code of nations, would be the only method of preventing, or sapping the foundations of that power, whether spiritual or temporal, which the clergy assume; and which, in some countries, has made them become formidable to the state. This is the only way to extinguish insensibly the enthusiasm of the clergy, and the fanaticism of the people.

Persecution would hasten the downfall of the religions that are now established. Industry and the means of information have now prevailed among the nations, and gained an influence that must restore a certain equilibrium in the moral and civil order of society: the human mind is undeceived with regard to its former superstition. If we do not avail ourselves of the present time to re-establish the empire of reason, it must necessarily be given up to new superstitions. Every thing has concurred for these two last centuries to extinguish that furious zeal which ravaged the globe. Navigation and long voyages have insensibly detached a great number of the people from the absurd ideas which superstition inspires. The variety of religious worships, and the difference of nations, has accustomed the most vulgar minds to a sort of indifference for the object that had the greatest influence over their imaginations.

Trade

Trade, carried on between persons of the most opposite sects, has lessened the religious hatred which was the cause of their divisions. It has been found, that morality and integrity are not inconsistent with any opinions whatever; and that irregularity of manners and avarice are equally prevalent every where: and hence it has been concluded, that the manners of men have been regulated by the difference of climate and of government, and by social and natural interest.

RAYNAL.

TOLERATION NOT A PRIESTLY VIRTUE.

THE long schism, which had divided the Latin church for near forty years, was finally terminated by the council of Constance; which deposed the pope, John XXIII. for his crimes, and elected Martin V. in his place, who was acknowledged by almost all the kingdoms of Europe. This great and unusual act of authority in the council, gave the Roman pontiffs ever after a mortal antipathy to those assemblies. The same jealousy which had long prevailed in most European countries, between the civil aristocracy and monarchy, now also took place between these powers in the ecclesiastical body. But the great separation of the bishops in the several states, and the difficulty of assembling them, gave the pope

pope a mighty advantage; and made it more easy for him to centre all the powers of the hierarchy in his own person. The cruelty and treachery which attended the punishment of John Hus and Jerome of Prague, the unhappy disciples of Wickliffe, who, in violation of a safe-conduct, were burned alive for their errors by the council of Constance, prove this melancholy truth, That toleration is none of the virtues of priests in any form of ecclesiastical government.

HUME.

THE CHIEF CAUSES AND ORIGIN OF TOLERATION.

IN all former ages, not wholly excepting even those of Greece and Rome, religious sects and heresies and schisms had been esteemed dangerous, if not pernicious, to civil government, and were regarded as the source of faction, and private combination, and opposition to the laws. The magistrate therefore applied himself directly to the cure of this evil, as of every other; and very naturally attempted, by penal statutes, to suppress those separate communities, and punish the obstinate innovators. But it was found by fatal experience, and after spilling an ocean of blood in those theological quarrels, that the evil was of a peculiar nature, and was both inflamed by violent

lent remedies, and diffused itself more rapidly throughout the whole society. Hence, though late, arose the paradoxical principle and salutary practice of toleration.

The liberty of the press was incompatible with such maxims and such principles of government as then prevailed; and was therefore quite unknown in that age. Besides employing the two terrible courts of star-chamber and high commission, whose powers were unlimited, Queen Elizabeth exerted her authority by restraints upon the press. She passed a decree in her court of star-chamber, that is, by her own will and pleasure, forbidding any book to be printed in any place but in London, Oxford, and Cambridge: And another, in which she prohibited, under severe penalties, the publishing of any book or pamphlet "against the form or meaning of any restraint or ordinance, contained, or to be contained, in any statute or laws of this realm, or in any injunction made or set forth by her Majesty or her privy-council, or against the true sense or meaning of any letters patent, commissions, or prohibitions under the great-seal of England." James extended the same penalties to the importing of such books from abroad. And to render these edicts more effectual, he afterwards inhibited the printing of any book without a licence from the Archbishop of Canterbury, the

Archbishop of York, the Bishop of London, or the Vice-chancellor of one of the universities, or of some person appointed by them.

In tracing the coherence among the systems of modern theology, we may observe, that the doctrine of absolute decrees has ever been intimately connected with the enthusiastic spirit; as that doctrine affords the highest subject of joy, triumph, and security, to the supposed elect, and exalts them, by infinite degrees, above the rest of mankind. All the first reformers adopted these principles; and the Jansenists too, a fanatical sect in France, not to mention the Mahometans in Asia, have ever embraced them. As the Lutheran establishments were subjected to episcopal jurisdiction, their enthusiastic genius gradually decayed, and men had leisure to perceive the absurdity of supposing God to punish, by infinite torments, what he himself from all eternity had unchangeably decreed. The king, though at this time his Calvinistic education had rivetted him in the doctrine of absolute decrees; yet, being a zealous partisan of episcopacy, was insensibly engaged, towards the end of his reign, to favour the milder theology of Arminius. Even in so great a doctor, the genius of the religion prevailed over its speculative tenets; and with him the whole clergy gradually dropped the more rigid principles of absolute reprobation and unconditional decrees.

Some noise was at first made about these innovations ; but being drowned in the fury of factions and civil wars which ensued, the scholastic arguments made an insignificant figure amidst those violent disputes about civil and ecclesiastical power, with which the nation was agitated. And at the Restoration, the church, though she still retained her old subscriptions and articles of faith, was found to have totally changed her speculative doctrines, and to have embraced tenets more suitable to the genius of her discipline and worship, without its being possible to assign the precise period in which the alteration was produced.

HUME.

TOLERATION.

MARTYRS are productive of proselytes. The execution of a person of that character made more Protestants than Calvin's Institutes. The sixth part of France were Calvinists under Francis II. ; as one third of Germany, at least, were Lutherans under Charles V.

There remained only one right way to act ; which was, to imitate the example of Charles V. who, after a series of wars, concluded at length with granting liberty of conscience ; and that of Queen Elizabeth, who maintained the established religion, but allowed every body to worship God their

their own way, provided they behaved as peaceable subjects.

This is the maxim now observed in all those countries heretofore ravaged by religious wars, after having been convinced by repeated, though too fatal experiments, of the rectitude of this measure.

But, before this measure can be pursued, the laws must be in force, and the fury of parties must begin to subside. France was nothing but one continual scene of sanguinary factions from the reign of Francis I. to the happy days of Henry the Great. In those licentious times the laws were trampled upon: and even when the civil wars were at an end, fanaticism survived, and assassinated this monarch, in the bosom of peace, by the hand of a madman, a visionary let loose from a cloister.

VOLTAIRE.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

WHAT is toleration? It is a privilege to which human nature is entitled: we are all made up of weakness and errors; it therefore behoves us mutually to forgive one another's follies. This is the very first law of Nature.

Though the Guebre, the Banian, the Jew, the Mahometan, the lettered Chinese, the Greek, the Roman Catholic, the Quaker, traffic together on

the Exchange of Amsterdam, London, Surat, or Bassora, they will never offer to lift up a poniard against each other to gain proselytes; wherefore, then, since the first council of Nice, have we been almost continually cutting each other's throats?

Constantine began with issuing an edict allowing the exercise of all religions, and some time after turned persecutor. Before him, all the severe treatment of the Christians proceeded purely from their beginning to make a party in the state. The Romans permitted every kind of worship, even of the Jews and Egyptians, both which they so very much despised. How then came Rome to tolerate these forms? It was because neither the Egyptians nor the Jews themselves went about to exterminate the ancient religion of the empire; they did not cross seas and lands to make proselytes; the getting of money was all they minded: whereas, it is indisputable, that the Christians could not be easy unless their religion bore the sway. The Jews were disgusted at the statue of Jupiter being set up at Jerusalem; but the Christians would not so much as allow it to be in the Capitol of Rome. St Thomas candidly owns, that it was only for want of power that the Christians did not dethrone the emperors: they held that all the world ought to embrace their religion; this of course made them enemies to all the world till its happy conversion.

Their

Their controversial points likewise set them at enmity one against another concerning the divinity of Christ: they who denied it, were anathematised as Ebionites; and these anathematised the worshippers of Jesus.

If some would have all goods to be in common, as they alleged was the custom in the Apostles time, their adversaries call them Nicolaitans, and accuse them of the most horrid crimes. If others set up for a mystical devotion, they are branded with the appellation of Gnostics, and opposed with extreme vehemence and severity. Marcion, for disputing on the Trinity, got the name of an idolater.

Tertullian, Praxeas, Origen, Novatus, Novatianus, Sabellus, and Donatus, were all persecuted by their brethren before Constantine's time; and no sooner had Constantine established the Christian religion, than the Athanasians and Eusebians fell foul of one another; and ever since, down to our own times, the Christian church has been deluged with blood.

The Jewish people were, I own, extremely barbarous and merciless, massacring all the inhabitants of a little wretched country, to which they had no more right than their vile descendants have to Paris or London. However, when Naaman is cured of his leprosy by dipping seven times in the river Jordan, and by way of expressing his

gratitude to Elisha, from whom he had the secret of that easy cure, he tells him that he will worship the God of the Jews, he yet reserves to himself the liberty to worship his sovereign's god likewise; and asks Elisha's leave, which the prophet readily grants. The Jews worshipped their God; but never were offended at, or so much as thought it strange, that every nation had its own deity. They acquiesced in Chamoth's giving a track of land to the Moabites, provided they would let them quietly enjoy what they held from their God. Jacob made no difficulty of marrying an idolater's daughter; for Laban had another kind of God than he whom Jacob worshipped. These are instances of toleration among the most haughty, most obstinate, and most cruel people of all antiquity; and we, overlooking what little indulgence was among them, have imitated only their sanguinary rancour.

Every individual persecuting another for not being of his opinion is a monster; this is evident beyond all dispute: but the government! men in power, princes! how are they to deal with those of a different worship from theirs? If foreigners and powerful, it is certain princes will not disdain entering into an alliance with them. Francis I. though his Most Christian majesty, unites with the Mussulmen against Charles V. likewise a Most Christian monarch. Francis supplies the German
Luthe-

Lutherans with money to support their revolt against the Emperor; but, according to custom, burns them in his own country. Thus from policy he pays them in Saxony; and from policy makes bonfires of them at Paris. But what was the consequence? Persecution ever makes proselytes. France came to swarm with new Protestants; who at first quietly submitted to be hanged, and afterwards hung others: civil wars came on; and St Bartholomew's day, or the Massacre of Paris, crowned all. Thus this corner of the world became worse than all that ever the ancients or moderns have said of hell.

Ye fools! never to pay a proper worship to the God who made you! wretches, on whom the example of the Noachidæ, the lettered Chinese, the Perses, and all wise men, have had no influence! monsters! to whom superstitions are as necessary as carrion to crows! You have been already told it, and I have nothing else to tell you; whilst you have but two religions among you, they will be ever at daggers drawing; if you have thirty, they will live quietly. Turn your eyes to the Grand Seignior; he has among his subjects Guebres, Banians, Greeks, Latins, Christians, and Nestorians. Whoever goes about to raise any disturbance is surely impaled; and thus all live in peace and quietness.

VOLTAIRE

UN-

UNLIMITED TOLERATION, THE ONLY
TRUE REMEDY TO ALLAY AND CORRECT
FANATICAL ZEAL.

THE zeal of the Covenanters was, in the political body, under Charles II. a disease dangerous and inveterate; and the government had tried every remedy, but the true one, to allay and correct it. An unlimited toleration, after sects have diffused themselves, and are strongly rooted, is the only expedient which can allay their fervour, and make the civil union acquire a superiority above religious distinctions. But as the operations of this regimen are commonly gradual, and at first imperceptible, vulgar politicians are apt, for that reason, to have recourse to more hasty and more dangerous remedies. It is observable too, that these nonconformists in Scotland neither offered nor demanded toleration; but laid claim to entire superiority, and to the exercise of extreme rigour against their adversaries. The covenant, which they idolized, was a persecuting, as well as a seditious, band of confederacy; and the government, instead of treating them like madmen, who should be soothed, and flattered, and deceived into tranquillity, thought themselves intitled to a rigid obedience; and were too apt, from a mistaken policy, to retaliate upon the dissenters,

senters, who had erred from the spirit of enthusiasm.

HUME.

T O L L S.

THAT the erection and maintenance of the public works which facilitate the commerce of any country, such as good roads, bridges, navigable canals, harbours, &c. must require very different degrees of expence in the different periods of society, is evident without any proof. The expence of making and maintaining the public roads of any country, must evidently increase with the annual produce of the land and labour of that country, or with the quantity and weight of the goods which it becomes necessary to fetch and carry upon those roads. The strength of a bridge must be suited to the number and weight of the carriages which are likely to pass over it. The depth and the supply of water for a navigable canal must be proportioned to the number and tonnage of the lighters which are likely to carry goods upon it; the extent of a harbour to the number of shipping which are likely to take shelter in it.

It does not seem necessary that the expence of those public works should be defrayed from that public revenue, as it is commonly called, of which the collection and application is in most countries at-

assigned to the executive power. The greater part of such public works may easily be so managed, as to afford a particular revenue sufficient for defraying their own expence, without bringing any burden upon the general revenue of the society.

A highway, a bridge, a navigable canal, for example, may in most cases be both made and maintained by a small toll upon the carriages which make use of them; a harbour, by a moderate port-duty upon the tonnage of the shipping which load or unload in it. The coinage, another institution for facilitating commerce in many countries, not only defrays its own expence, but affords a small revenue or seignorage to the sovereign. The post-office, another institution for the same purpose, over and above defraying its own expence, affords in almost all countries a very considerable revenue to the sovereign.

When the carriages which pass over a highway or a bridge, and the lighters which sail upon a navigable canal, pay toll in proportion to their weight or their tonnage, they pay for the maintenance of those public works exactly in proportion to the wear and tear which they occasion of them. It seems scarce possible to invent a more equitable way of maintaining such works. This tax or toll, too, though it is advanced by the carrier, is finally paid by the consumer, to whom it must

must always be charged in the price of the goods. As the expence of carriage, however, is very much reduced by means of such public works; the goods, notwithstanding the toll, come cheaper to the consumer than they could otherwise have done; their price not being so much raised by the toll, as it is lowered by the cheapness of the carriage. The person who finally pays this tax, therefore, gains by the application more than he loses by the payment of it. His payment is exactly in proportion to his gain. It is in reality, no more than a part of that gain which he is obliged to give up in order to get the rest. It seems impossible to imagine a more equitable method of raising a tax.

When the toll upon carriages of luxury, upon coaches, post-chaises, &c. is made somewhat higher in proportion to their weight, than upon carriages of necessary use, such as carts, waggons, &c. the indolence and vanity of the rich is made to contribute in a very easy manner to the relief of the poor, by rendering cheaper the transportation of heavy goods to all the different parts of the country.

When high-roads, bridges, canals, &c. are in this manner made and supported by the commerce which is carried on by means of them, they can be made only where that commerce requires them; and, consequently, where it is proper to
make

make them. Their expence, too, their grandeur and magnificence, must be suited to what that commerce can afford to pay. They must be made consequently as it is proper to make them. A magnificent high-road cannot be made through a desert country where there is little or no commerce, or merely because it happens to lead to the country villa of the intendant of the province, or to that of some great lord to whom the intendant finds it convenient to make his court. A great bridge cannot be thrown over a river at a place where nobody passes, or merely to embellish the view from the windows of a neighbouring palace: things which sometimes happen, in countries where works of this kind are carried on by any other revenue than that which they themselves are capable of affording.

In several different parts of Europe, the toll or lock-duty upon a canal is the property of private persons, whose private interest obliges them to keep up the canal. If it be not kept in tolerable order, the navigation necessarily ceases altogether, and along with it the whole profits which they can make by the tolls. If those tolls were put under the management of commissioners, who had themselves no interest in them, they might be less attentive to the maintenance of the works which produced them. The canal of Languedoc cost the King of France and the province

upwards of thirteen millions of livres, which (at twenty-eight livres the mark of silver, the value of French money in the end of the last century) amounted to upwards of nine hundred thousand pounds sterling. When that great work was finished, the most likely method, it was found, of keeping it in constant repair, was to make a present of the tolls to Riquet the engineer, who planned and conducted the work. Those tolls constitute at present a very large estate to the different branches of the family of that gentleman; who have therefore a great interest to keep the work in constant repair. But had those tolls been put under the management of commissioners who had no such interest, they might perhaps have been dissipated in ornamental and unnecessary expences, while the most essential parts of the work were allowed to go to ruin.

The tolls for the maintenance of a high-road, cannot with any safety be made the property of private persons. A high-road, though entirely neglected, does not become altogether impassable, though a canal does. The proprietors of the tolls upon a high-road, therefore, might neglect altogether the repair of the road, and yet continue to levy very nearly the same tolls. It is proper therefore that the tolls for the maintenance of such a work should be put under the management of commissioners or trustees.

In Great Britain, the abuses which the trustees have committed in the management of those tolls, have in many cases been very justly complained of. At many turnpikes, it has been said, the money levied is more than double of what is necessary for executing, in the completest manner, the work which is often executed in a very slovenly manner, and sometimes not executed at all. The system of repairing the high-roads by tolls of this kind, it must be observed, is not of very long standing. We should not wonder, therefore, if it has not yet been brought to that degree of perfection of which it seems capable. If mean and improper persons are frequently appointed trustees; and if proper courts of inspection and account have not yet been established for controuling their conduct, and for reducing the tolls to what is barely sufficient for executing the work to be done by them; the recency of the institution both accounts and apologises for those defects, of which, by the wisdom of Parliament, the greater part may in due time be gradually remedied. A. SMITH.

GOVERNMENT OUGHT NOT TO HAVE THE MANAGEMENT OF TOLLS.

THE money levied at the different turnpikes in Great Britain is supposed to exceed so much what is necessary for repairing the roads, that the savings,

avings, which, with proper oeconomy, might be made from it, have been considered, even by some ministers, as a very great resource which might at some time or another be applied to the exigencies of the state. Government, it has been said, by taking the management of the turnpikes into its own hands, and by employing the soldiers, who would work for a very small addition to their pay, could keep the roads in good order at a much less expence than it can be done by trustees, who have no other workmen to employ but such as derive their whole subsistence from their wages. A great revenue, half a million, perhaps, it has been pretended, might in this manner be gained without laying any new burden upon the people; and the turnpike roads might be made to contribute to the general expence of the state, in the same manner as the post-office does at present.

That a considerable revenue might be gained in this manner I have no doubt, though probably not near so much as the projectors of this plan have supposed. The plan itself, however, seems liable to several very important objections.

First, if the tolls which are levied at the turnpikes should ever be considered as one of the resources for supplying the exigencies of the state, they would certainly be augmented as those exigencies were supposed to require. According to the policy of Great Britain, therefore, they would

probably be augmented very fast. The facility with which a great revenue could be drawn from them, would probably encourage administration to recur very frequently to this resource. Though it may, perhaps, be more than doubtful, whether half a million could by any oeconomy be saved out of the present tolls, it can scarce be doubted but that a million might be saved out of them if they were doubled; and perhaps two millions, if they were tripled. This great revenue too, might be levied without the appointment of a single new officer to collect and receive it. But the turnpike tolls being continually augmented in this manner, instead of facilitating the inland commerce of the country, as at present, would soon become a very great encumbrance upon it. The expence of transporting all heavy goods from one part of the country to another would soon be so much increased, the market for all such goods, consequently, would soon be so much narrowed, that their production would be in a great measure discouraged, and the most important branches of the domestic industry of the country annihilated altogether.

Secondly, a tax upon carriages in proportion to their weight, though a very equal tax when applied to the sole purpose of repairing the roads, is a very unequal one when applied to any other purpose, or to supply the common exigencies of the

the state. When it is applied to the sole purpose abovementioned, each carriage is supposed to pay exactly for the wear and tear which that carriage occasions of the roads. But when it is applied to any other purpose, each carriage is supposed to pay for more than that wear and tear, and contributes to the supply of some other exigency of the state. But as the turnpike toll raises the price of goods in proportion to their weight, and not to their value, it is chiefly paid by the consumers of coarse and bulky, not by those of precious and light commodities. Whatever exigency of the state therefore this tax might be intended to supply, that exigency would be chiefly supplied at the expence of the poor, not of the rich; at the expence of those who are least able to supply it, not of those who are most able.

Thirdly, if government should at any time neglect the reparation of the high roads, it would be still more difficult than it is at present to compel the proper application of any part of the turnpike tolls. A large revenue might thus be levied upon the people, without any part of it being applied to the only purpose to which a revenue levied in this manner ought ever to be applied. If the meanness and poverty of the trustees of turnpike roads render it sometimes difficult at present to oblige them to repair their wrong, their wealth and greatness would render it ten times more so in the case which is here supposed.

In France, the funds destined for the reparation of the high-roads are under the immediate direction of the executive power. Those funds consist, partly in a certain number of days labour which the country people are in most parts of Europe obliged to give to the reparation of the highways; and partly in such a portion of the general revenue of the state as the king chooses to spare from his other expences.

By the ancient law of France, as well as by that of most other parts of Europe, the labour of the country people was under the direction of a local or provincial magistracy, which had no immediate dependency upon the king's council. But by the present practice, both the labour of the country people, and whatever other fund the king may choose to assign for the reparation of the high-roads in any particular province or generality, are entirely under the management of the intendant; an officer who is appointed and removed by the king's council, who receives his orders from it, and is in constant correspondence with it. In the progress of despotism, the authority of the executive power gradually absorbs that of every other power in the state, and assumes to itself the management of every branch of revenue which is destined for any public purpose. In France, however, the great post-roads, the roads which make the communication between the prin-

principal towns of the kingdom, are in general kept in good order; and in some provinces are even a good deal superior to the greater part of the turnpike roads in England. But what we call the cross-roads, that is, the far greater part of the roads in the country, are entirely neglected, and are in many places absolutely impassible for any heavy carriage. In some places it is even dangerous to travel on horseback, and mules are the only conveyance which can safely be trusted. The proud minister of an ostentatious court may frequently take pleasure in executing a work of splendor and magnificence, such as a great highway which is frequently seen by the principal nobility, whose applauses not only flatter his vanity, but even contribute to support his interest at court. But to execute a great number of little works, in which nothing that can be done can make any great appearance, or excite the smallest degree of admiration in any traveller, and which, in short, have nothing to recommend them but their extreme utility, is a business which appears in every respect too mean and paltry to merit the attention of so great a magistrate. Under such an administration, therefore, such works are almost always entirely neglected.

In China, and in several other governments of Asia, the executive power charges itself both with the reparation of the high-roads, and with the main-

maintenance of the navigable canals. In the instructions which are given to the governor of each province, those objects, it is said, are constantly recommended to him; and the judgment which the court forms of his conduct is very much regulated by the attention which he appears to have paid to this part of his instructions. This branch of public police accordingly, is said to be very much attended to in all those countries, but particularly in China, where the high-roads, and still more the navigable canals, it is pretended, exceed very much every thing of the same kind which is known in Europe. The accounts of those works, however, which have been transmitted to Europe, have generally been drawn up by weak and wondering travellers; frequently by stupid and lying missionaries. If they had been examined by more intelligent eyes, and if the accounts of them had been reported by more faithful witnesses, they would not, perhaps, appear to be so wonderful. The account which Bernier gives of some works of this kind in Indostan, falls very much short of what had been reported of them by other travellers, more disposed to the marvellous than he was. It may, too, perhaps, be in those countries, as it is in France, where the great roads, the great communications which are likely to be the subjects of conversation at the court and in the capital, are attended to, and all the rest neglected.

glected. In China, besides, in Indostan, and in several other governments of Asia, the revenue of the sovereign arises almost altogether from a land-tax or land-rent, which rises or falls with the rise and fall of the annual produce of the land. The great interest of the sovereign, therefore, his revenue, is in such countries necessarily and immediately connected with the cultivation of the land, with the greatness of its produce, and with the value of its produce. But in order to render that produce both as great and as valuable as possible, it is necessary to procure to it as extensive a market as possible; and consequently to establish the freest, the easiest, and the least expensive communication between all the different parts of the country; which can be done only by means of the best roads and the best navigable canals. But the revenue of the sovereign does not, in any part of Europe, arise chiefly from a land-tax or land-rent. In all the great kingdoms of Europe, perhaps, the greater part of it may ultimately depend upon the produce of the land: But that dependency is neither so immediate, nor so evident. In Europe, therefore, the sovereign does not feel himself so directly called upon to promote the increase, both in quantity and value, of the produce of the land, or, by maintaining good roads and canals, to provide the most extensive market for that produce. Though it should be true, therefore,

fore, what I apprehend is not a little doubtful, that in some parts of Asia this department of the public police is very properly managed by the executive power, there is not the least probability that, during the present state of things, it could be tolerably managed by that power in any part of Europe.

Even those public works, which are of such a nature that they cannot afford any revenue for maintaining themselves, but of which the convenience is nearly confined to some particular place or district, are always better maintained by a local or provincial revenue, under the management of a local and provincial administration, than by the general revenue of the state, of which the executive power must always have the management. Were the streets of London to be lighted and paved at the expence of the treasury, is there any probability that they would be so well lighted and paved as they are at present, or even at so small an expence? The expence, besides, instead of being raised by a local tax upon the inhabitants of each particular street, parish, or district in London, would, in this case, be defrayed out of the general revenue of the state, and would consequently be raised by a tax upon all the inhabitants of the kingdom; of whom the greater part derive no sort of benefit from the lighting and paving of the streets of London.

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The abuses which sometimes creep into the local and provincial administration of a local and provincial revenue, how enormous soever they may appear, are in reality, however, almost always very trifling, in comparison of those which commonly take place in the administration and expenditure of the revenue of a great empire. They are, besides, much more easily corrected. Under the local or provincial administration of the justices of the peace in Great Britain, the six days labour which the country people are obliged to give to the reparation of the highways, is not always perhaps very judiciously applied; but it is scarce ever exacted with any circumstance of cruelty or oppression. In France, under the administration of the intendants, the application is not always more judicious, and the exaction is frequently the most cruel and oppressive. Such Corvées, as they are called, make one of the principal instruments of tyranny by which those officers chastise any parish or communeauté which has had the misfortune to fall under their displeasure.

A. SMITH.

AN OPEN TRADE.

IT would be better, in general, if government meddled no further with trade than to protect it,
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and let it take its course. Most of the statutes or acts, edicts, arrets and placarts, of parliaments, princes and states, for regulating, directing, or restraining of trade, have, we think, been either political blunders, or jobs obtained by artful men for private advantage, under pretence of public good. When Colbert assembled some wise old merchants of France, and desired their advice and opinion how he could best serve and promote commerce; their answer, after consultation, was in three words only, *Laiſſes nous faire*, "Let us alone."—It is said by a very solid writer of the same nation, that he is well advanced in the science of politics who knows the full force of that maxim, *Pas trop gouverner*; "Not to govern too much;" which, perhaps, would be of more use when applied to trade than in any other public concern. It were therefore to be wished, that commerce were as free between all nations in the world as it is between the several counties of England; so would all by mutual communication obtain more enjoyments. Those counties do not ruin each other by trade, neither would the nations. No nation was ever ruined by trade, even, seemingly, the most disadvantageous. Wherever desirable superfluities are imported, industry is excited, and thereby plenty is produced. Were only necessaries to be permitted to

be purchased, men would work no more than was necessary for that purpose.

FRANKLIN.

ADVANTAGES OF A PROPER FREEDOM OF TRADE.

IT can never be the interest of the proprietors and cultivators to restrain or to discourage in any respect the industry of merchants, artificers, and manufacturers. The greater the liberty which this unproductive class enjoys, the greater will be the competition in all the different trades which compose it, and the cheaper will the other two classes be supplied both with foreign goods and with the manufactured produce of their own country.

It can never be the interest of the unproductive class to oppress the other two classes. It is the surplus produce of the land, or what remains after deducting the maintenance, first, of the cultivators, and afterwards of the proprietors, that maintains and employs the unproductive class. The greater this surplus, the greater must likewise be the maintenance and employment of that class. The establishment of perfect justice, of perfect liberty, and of perfect equality, is the very simple secret which most effectually secures

the highest degree of prosperity to all the three classes.

The merchants, artificers, and manufacturers of those mercantile states which, like Holland and Hamburgh, consist chiefly of this unproductive class, are in the same manner maintained and employed altogether at the expence of the proprietors and cultivators of land. The only difference is, that those proprietors and cultivators are, the greater part of them, placed at a most inconvenient distance from the merchants, artificers, and manufacturers whom they supply with the materials of their work and the fund of their subsistence, are the inhabitants of other countries, and the subjects of other governments.

Such mercantile states, however, are not only useful, but greatly useful, to the inhabitants of those other countries. They fill up, in some measure, a very important void, and supply the place of the merchants, artificers, and manufacturers, whom the inhabitants of those countries ought to find at home; but whom, from some defect in their policy, they do not find at home.

It can never be the interest of those landed nations, if I may call them so, to discourage or distress the industry of such mercantile states, by imposing high duties upon their trade, or upon the commodities which they furnish. Such duties, by rendering those commodities dearer, could
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serve only to sink the real value of the surplus produce of their own land; with which, or, what comes to the same thing, with the price of which those commodities are purchased. Such duties could serve only to discourage the increase of that surplus produce, and consequently the improvement and cultivation of their own land. The most effectual expedient, on the contrary, for raising the value of that surplus produce, for encouraging its increase, and consequently the improvement and cultivation of their own land, would be to allow the most perfect freedom to the trade of all such mercantile nations.

This perfect freedom of trade would even be the most effectual expedient for supplying them in due time with all the artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, whom they wanted at home, and for filling up, in the properest and most advantageous manner, that very important void which they felt there.

The continual increase of the surplus produce of their land, would in due time create a greater capital than what could be employed with the ordinary rate of profit in the improvement and cultivation of land; and the surplus part of it would naturally turn itself to the employment of artificers and manufacturers at home. But those artificers and manufacturers finding at home both the materials of their work and the fund of their

subsistence, might immediately, even with much less art and skill, be able to work as cheap as the like artificers and manufacturers of such mercantile states, who had both to bring from a great distance. Even though, from want of art and skill, they might not for some time be able to work as cheap; yet, finding a market at home, they might be able to sell their work there as cheap as that of the artificers and manufacturers of such mercantile states, which could not be brought to that market but from so great a distance; and as their art and skill improved, they would soon be able to sell it cheaper. The artificers and manufacturers of such mercantile states, therefore, would immediately be rivalled in the market of those landed nations, and soon after underfold and justled out of it altogether. The cheapness of the manufactures of those landed nations, in consequence of the gradual improvements of art and skill, would in due time extend their sale beyond the home market, and carry them to many foreign markets; from which they would in the same manner gradually justle out many of the manufactures of such mercantile nations.

This continual increase, both of the rude and manufactured produce of those landed nations, would in due time create a greater capital than could, with the ordinary rate of profit, be employed either in agriculture or in manufactures.

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The surplus of this capital would naturally turn itself to foreign trade, and be employed in exporting to foreign countries such parts of the rude and manufactured produce of its own country as exceeded the demand of the home market. In the exportation of the produce of their own country, the merchants of a landed nation would have an advantage of the same kind over those of mercantile nations, which its artificers and manufacturers had over the artificers and manufacturers of such nations; the advantage of finding at home that cargo, and those stores and provisions, which the others were obliged to seek for at a distance. With inferior art and skill in navigation, therefore, they would be able to sell that cargo as cheap in foreign markets as the merchants of such mercantile nations; and with equal art and skill they would be able to sell it cheaper. They would soon therefore rival those mercantile nations in this branch of foreign trade, and in due time would jostle them out of it altogether.

According to this liberal and generous system, therefore, the most advantageous method in which a landed nation can raise up artificers, manufacturers, and merchants of its own, is to grant the most perfect freedom of trade to the artificers, manufacturers, and merchants of all other nations. It thereby raises the value of the surplus produce of its own land, of which the continual

increase gradually establishes a fund, which in due time necessarily raises up all the artificers, manufacturers, and merchants whom it has occasion for.

When a landed nation, on the contrary, oppresses, either by high duties or by prohibitions, the trade of foreign nations, it necessarily hurts its own interest in two different ways. First, by raising the price of all foreign goods and of all sorts of manufactures, it necessarily sinks the real value of the surplus produce of its own land, with which, or, what comes to the same thing, with the price of which it purchases those foreign goods and manufactures. Secondly, by giving a sort of monopoly of the home market to its own merchants, artificers, and manufacturers, it raises the rate of mercantile and manufacturing profit in proportion to that of agricultural profit, and consequently either draws from agriculture a part of the capital which had before been employed in it, or hinders from going to it a part of what would otherwise have gone to it. This policy therefore discourages agriculture in two different ways; first, by sinking the real value of its produce, and thereby lowering the rate of its profit; and, secondly, by raising the rate of profit in all other employments. Agriculture is rendered less advantageous, and trade and manufactures more advantageous, than they otherwise would be; and every
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man is tempted by his own interest to turn, as much as he can, both his capital and his industry from the former to the latter employments.

Though, by this oppressive policy, a landed nation should be able to raise up artificers, manufacturers, and merchants of its own, somewhat sooner than it could do by the freedom of trade; a matter, however, which is not a little doubtful: yet it would raise them up, if one may say so, prematurely, and before it was perfectly ripe for them. By raising up too hastily one species of industry, it would depress another more valuable species of industry. By raising up too hastily a species of industry which only replaces the stock which employs it, together with the ordinary profit, it would depress a species of industry which, over and above replacing that stock with its profit, affords likewise a neat produce, a free rent to the landlord. It would depress productive labour, by encouraging too hastily that labour which is altogether barren and unproductive.

In what manner, according to this system, the sum total of the annual produce of the land is distributed among the three classes above mentioned, and in what manner the labour of the unproductive class does no more than replace the value of its own consumption, without increasing in any respect the value of that sum total, is represented by Mr Quesnai, the very ingenious and
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profound author of this system, in some arithmetical formularies. The first of these formularies, which by way of eminence he peculiarly distinguishes by the name of *the Oeconomical Table*, represents the manner in which he supposes this distribution takes place in a state of the most perfect liberty, and therefore of the highest prosperity; in a state where the annual produce is such, as to afford the greatest possible neat produce, and where each class enjoys its proper share of the whole annual produce. Some subsequent formularies represent the manner in which he supposes this distribution is made in different states of restraint and regulation; in which either the class of proprietors, or the barren and unproductive class, is more favoured than the class of cultivators; and in which either the one or the other encroaches more or less upon the share which ought properly to belong to this productive class. Every such encroachment, every violation of that natural distribution, which the most perfect liberty would establish, must, according to this system, necessarily degrade more or less, from one year to another, the value and sum total of the annual produce, and must necessarily occasion a gradual declension in the real wealth and revenue of the society; a declension, of which the progress must be quicker or slower according to the degree of this encroachment, according as that natural distribution,

tribution, which the most perfect liberty would establish, is more or less violated. Those subsequent formularies represent the different degrees of declension which, according to this system, correspond to the different degrees in which this natural distribution of things is violated.

Some speculative physicians seem to have imagined, that the health of the human body could be preserved only by a certain precise regimen of diet and exercise; of which every, the smallest, violation necessarily occasioned some degree of disease or disorder proportioned to the degree of the violation. Experience, however, would seem to show that the human body frequently preserves, to all appearance at least, the most perfect state of health under a vast variety of different regimens; even under some which are generally believed to be very far from being perfectly wholesome. But the healthful state of the human body, it would seem, contains in itself some unknown principle of preservation, capable either of preventing or of correcting, in many respects, the bad effects even of a very faulty regimen. Mr Quesnai, who was himself a physician, and a very speculative physician, seems to have entertained a notion of the same kind concerning the political body, and to have imagined that it would thrive and prosper only under a certain precise regimen, the exact regimen of perfect liberty and perfect justice.

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He seems not to have considered, that in the political body, the natural effort which every man is continually making to better his own condition, is a principle of preservation capable of preventing and correcting, in many respects, the bad effects of a political œconomy, in some degree, both partial and oppressive. Such a political œconomy, though it no doubt retards more or less, is not always capable of stopping altogether the natural progress of a nation towards wealth and prosperity, and still less of making it go backwards. If a nation could not prosper without the enjoyment of perfect liberty and perfect justice, there is not in the world a nation which could ever have prospered. In the political body, however, the wisdom of nature has fortunately made ample provision for remedying many of the bad effects of the folly and injustice of man; in the same manner as it has done in the natural body, for remedying those of his sloth and intemperance.

The capital error of this system, however, seems to lie in its representing the class of artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, as altogether barren and unproductive. The following observations may serve to show the impropriety of this representation.

First, this class, it is acknowledged, reproduces annually the value of its own annual consumption.

sumption, and continues at least the existence of the stock or capital which maintains and employs it. But upon this account alone the denomination of barren or unproductive should seem to be very improperly applied to it. We should not call a marriage barren or unproductive, though it produced only a son and a daughter to replace the father and mother, and though it did not increase the number of the human species, but only continued it as it was before. Farmers and country labourers, indeed, over and above the stock which maintains and employs them, reproduce annually a neat produce, a free rent to the landlord. As a marriage which affords three children is certainly more productive than one which affords only two; so the labour of farmers and country labourers is certainly more productive than that of merchants, artificers, and manufacturers. The superior produce of the one class, however, does not render the other barren or unproductive.

Secondly, it seems upon this account altogether improper to consider artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, in the same light as menial servants. The labour of menial servants does not continue the existence of the fund which maintains and employs them. Their maintenance and employment is altogether at the expence of their masters, and the work which they perform is not of a nature to repay that expence. That
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work consists in services which perish generally in the very instant of their performance, and does not fix or realise itself in any vendible commodity which can replace the value of their wages and maintenance. The labour, on the contrary, of artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, naturally does fix and realise itself in some such vendible commodity.

Thirdly, it seems, upon every supposition, improper to say, that the labour of artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, does not increase the real revenue of the society. Though we should suppose, for example, as it seems to be supposed in this system, that the value of the daily, monthly, and yearly consumption of this class was exactly equal to that of its daily, monthly, and yearly production; yet it would not from thence follow, that its labour added nothing to the real revenue, to the real value of the annual produce of the land and labour of the society. An artificer, for example, who in the first six months after harvest, executes ten pounds worth of work, though he should in the same time consume ten pounds worth of corn and other necessaries, yet really adds the value of ten pounds to the annual produce of the land and labour of the society. While he has been consuming a half-yearly revenue of ten pounds worth of corn and other necessaries, he has produced an equal value of work

capable of purchasing, either to himself or to some other person, an equal half-yearly revenue. The value therefore of what has been consumed and produced during these six months is equal, not to ten, but to twenty pounds. It is possible, indeed, that no more than ten pounds worth of this value may ever have existed at any one moment of time. But if the ten pounds worth of corn and other necessaries, which were consumed by the artificer, had been consumed by a soldier or by a menial servant, the value of that part of the annual produce which existed at the end of the six months, would have been ten pounds less than it actually is in consequence of the labour of the artificer. Though the value of what the artificer produces, therefore, should not at any one moment of time be supposed greater than the value he consumes; yet at every moment of time the actually existing value of goods in the market is, in consequence of what he produces, greater than it otherwise would be.

When the patrons of this system assert, that the consumption of artificers, manufacturers, and merchants, is equal to the value of what they produce, they probably mean no more than that their revenue, or the fund destined for their consumption, is equal to it. But if they had expressed themselves more accurately, and only asserted, that the revenue of this class was equal

to the value of what they produced, it might readily have occurred to the reader, that what would naturally be saved out of this revenue, must necessarily increase more or less the real wealth of the society. In order therefore to make out something like an argument, it was necessary that they should express themselves as they have done; and this argument, even supposing things actually were as it seems to presume them to be, turns out to be a very inconclusive one.

Fourthly, farmers and country labourers can no more augment, without parsimony, the real revenue, the annual produce of the land and labour of their society, than artificers, manufacturers, and merchants. The annual produce of the land and labour of any society can be augmented only in two ways; either, first, by some improvement in the productive powers of the useful labour actually maintained within it; or, secondly, by some increase in the quantity of that labour.

The improvement in the productive powers of useful labour depend, first, upon the improvement in the ability of the workman; and, secondly, upon that of the machinery with which he works. But the labour of artificers and manufacturers, as it is capable of being more subdivided, and the labour of each workman reduced to a greater simplicity of operation than that of farmers and country labourers, so it is likewise

wife capable of both these sorts of improvement in a much higher degree. In this respect therefore the class of cultivators can have no sort of advantage over that of artificers and manufacturers.

The increase in the quantity of useful labour actually employed within any society, must depend altogether upon the increase of the capital which employs it; and the increase of that capital again must be exactly equal to the amount of the savings from the revenue, either of the particular persons who manage and direct the employment of that capital, or of some other persons who lend it to them. If merchants, artificers, and manufacturers are, as this system seems to suppose, naturally more inclined to parsimony and saving than proprietors and cultivators; they are so far more likely to augment the quantity of useful labour employed within their society, and consequently to increase its real revenue, the annual produce of its land and labour.

Fifthly and lastly, though the revenue of the inhabitants of every country was supposed to consist altogether, as this system seems to suppose, in the quantity of subsistence which their industry could procure to them; yet, even upon this supposition, the revenue of a trading and manufacturing country must, other things being equal, always be much greater than that of one without

trade or manufactures. By means of trade and manufactures, a greater quantity of subsistence can be annually imported into a particular country than what its own lands, in the actual state of their cultivation, could afford. The inhabitants of a town, though they frequently possess no lands of their own, yet draw to themselves by their industry such a quantity of the rude produce of the lands of other people as supplies them, not only with the materials of their work, but with the fund of their subsistence. What a town always is with regard to the country in its neighbourhood, one independent state or country may frequently be with regard to other independent states or countries. It is thus that Holland draws a great part of its subsistence from other countries; live cattle from Holstein and Jutland, and corn from almost all the different countries of Europe. A small quantity of manufactured produce purchases a great quantity of rude produce. A trading and manufacturing country, therefore, naturally purchases, with a small part of its manufactured produce, a great part of the rude produce of other countries; while, on the contrary, a country without trade and manufactures is generally obliged to purchase, at the expence of great part of its rude produce, a very small part of the manufactured produce of other countries. The one exports what can subsist and accommodate

commodate but a very few, and imports the subsistence and accommodation of a great number. The other exports the accommodation and subsistence of a great number, and imports that of a very few only. The inhabitants of the one must always enjoy a much greater quantity of subsistence than what their own lands, in the actual state of their cultivation, could afford. The inhabitants of the other must always enjoy a much smaller quantity.

A. SMITH.

DIFFERENT SYSTEMS OF POLITICAL OECONOMY AMONG DIFFERENT NATIONS, WITH REGARD TO TRADE AND AGRICULTURE.

AS the political œconomy of the nations of modern Europe has been more favourable to manufactures and foreign trade, the industry of the towns, than to agriculture, the industry of the country; so that of other nations has followed a different plan, and has been more favourable to agriculture than to manufactures and foreign trade.

The policy of China favours agriculture more than all other employments. In China, the condition of a labourer is said to be as much superior to that of an artificer, as in most parts of Europe that of an artificer is to that of a labourer.

In China, the great ambition of every man is to get possession of some little bit of land, either in property or in lease: and leases are there said to be granted upon very moderate terms, and to be sufficiently secured to the lessees. The Chinese have little respect for foreign trade. Your beggarly commerce! was the language in which the Mandarins of Peking used to talk to Mr De Lange the Russian envoy concerning it. Except with Japan, the Chinese carry on, themselves, and in their own bottoms, little or no foreign trade; and it is only into one or two ports of their kingdom that they even admit the ships of foreign nations. Foreign trade therefore is, in China, every way confined within a much narrower circle than that to which it would naturally extend itself, if more freedom was allowed to it, either in their own ships or in those of foreign nations.

Manufactures, as in a small bulk they frequently contain a great value, and can upon that account be transported at less expence from one country to another than most parts of rude produce, are, in almost all countries, the principal support of foreign trade. In countries, besides, less extensive and less favourably circumstanced for interior commerce than China, they generally require the support of foreign trade. Without an extensive foreign market they could not well flourish, either in countries so moderately extensive

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five as to afford but a narrow home market; or in countries where the communication between one province and another was so difficult, as to render it impossible for the goods of any particular place to enjoy the whole of that home market which the country could afford. The perfection of manufacturing industry, it must be remembered, depends altogether upon the division of labour: and the degree to which the division of labour can be introduced into any manufacture, is necessarily regulated by the extent of the market. But the great extent of the empire of China, the vast multitude of its inhabitants, the variety of climate, and consequently of productions in its different provinces, and the easy communication by means of water-carriage between the greater part of them, render the home market of that country of so great extent, as to be alone sufficient to support very great manufactures, and to admit of very considerable subdivisions of labour. The home market of China is, perhaps, in extent, not much inferior to the market of all the different countries of Europe put together. A more extensive foreign trade, however, which to this great home market added the foreign market of all the rest of the world, especially if any considerable part of this trade was carried on in Chinese ships, could scarce fail to increase very much the manufactures of China, and to improve
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very much the productive powers of its manufacturing industry. By a more extensive navigation, the Chinese would naturally learn the art of using and constructing themselves all the different machines made use of in other countries, as well as the other improvements of art and industry which are practised in all the different parts of the world. Upon their present plan they have little opportunity of improving themselves by the example of any other nation, except that of the Japanese.

The policy of ancient Egypt, too, and that of the Gentoo government of Indostan, seem to have favoured agriculture more than all other employments.

Both in ancient Egypt and Indostan, the whole body of the people was divided into different casts or tribes; each of which was confined, from father to son, to a particular employment or class of employments. The son of a priest, was necessarily a priest; the son of a soldier, a soldier; the son of a labourer, a labourer; the son of a weaver, a weaver; the son of a taylor, a taylor, &c. In both countries, the cast of the priests held the highest rank, and that of the soldiers the next; and in both countries, the cast of the farmers and labourers was superior to the casts of merchants and manufacturers.

The government of both countries was particularly

cularly attentive to the interest of agriculture. The works constructed by the ancient sovereigns of Egypt for the proper distribution of the waters of the Nile, were famous in antiquity; and the ruined remains of some of them are still the admiration of travellers. Those of the same kind, which were constructed by the ancient sovereigns of Indostan, for the proper distribution of the waters of the Ganges, as well as of many other rivers, though they have been less celebrated, seem to have been equally great. Both countries, accordingly, though subject occasionally to dearths, have been famous for their great fertility. Though both were extremely populous; yet, in years of moderate plenty, they were both able to export great quantities of grain to their neighbours.

The ancient Egyptians had a superstitious aversion to the sea; and as the Gentoo religion does not permit its followers to light a fire, nor consequently to dress any victuals, upon the water, it in effect prohibits them from all distant sea voyages. Both the Egyptians and Indians must have depended almost altogether upon the navigation of other nations for the exportation of their surplus produce; and this dependency, as it must have confined the market, so it must have discouraged the increase of this surplus produce. It must have discouraged too the increase of the manufactured produce more than that of the rude pro-

produce. Manufactures require a much more extensive market than the most important parts of the rude produce of the land. A single shoemaker will make more than three hundred pairs of shoes in the year; and his own family will not perhaps wear out six pairs. Unless, therefore, he has the custom of at least fifty such families as his own, he cannot dispose of the whole produce of his own labour. The most numerous class of artificers will seldom in a large country make more than one in fifty, or one in a hundred, of the whole number of families contained in it. But in such large countries as France and England, the number of people employed in agriculture has, by some authors, been computed at a half, by others at a third, and by no author that I know of, at less than a fifth of the whole inhabitants of the country. But as the produce of the agriculture of both France and England is, the far greater part of it, consumed at home; each person employed in it must, according to these computations, require little more than the custom of one, two, or at most of four such families as his own, in order to dispose of the whole produce of his own labour. Agriculture therefore can support itself under the discouragement of a confined market much better than manufactures. In both ancient Egypt and Indostan, indeed, the confinement of the foreign market was in some measure compensated

compensated by the conveniency of many inland navigations; which opened, in the most advantageous manner, the whole extent of the home market to every part of the produce of every different district of those countries. The great extent of Indostan, too, rendered the home market of that country very great, and sufficient to support a great variety of manufactures. But the small extent of ancient Egypt, which was never equal to England, must at all times have rendered the home market of that country too narrow for supporting any great variety of manufactures. Bengal, accordingly, the province of Indostan, which commonly exports the greatest quantity of rice, has always been more remarkable for the exportation of a great variety of manufactures, than for that of its grain. Ancient Egypt, on the contrary, though it exported some manufactures, fine linen in particular, as well as some other goods, was always most distinguished for its great exportation of grain. It was long the granary of the Roman empire.

The sovereigns of China, of ancient Egypt, and of the different kingdoms into which Indostan has at different times been divided, have always derived the whole, or by far the most considerable part of their revenue, from some sort of land-tax or land-rent. This land-tax, or land-rent, like the tithe in Europe, consisted in a certain
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proportion, a fifth, it is said, of the produce of the land; which was either delivered in kind, or paid in money according to a certain valuation; and which therefore varied from year to year according to all the variations of the produce. It was natural, therefore, that the sovereigns of those countries should be particularly attentive to the interests of agriculture; upon the prosperity or declension of which immediately depended the yearly increase or diminution of their own revenue.

The policy of the ancient republics of Greece, and that of Rome, though it honoured agriculture more than manufactures or foreign trade; yet seems rather to have discouraged the latter employments, than to have given any direct or intentional encouragement to the former. In several of the ancient states of Greece, foreign trade was prohibited altogether: and in several others, the employments of artificers and manufacturers were considered as hurtful to the strength and agility of the human body, as rendering it incapable of those habits which their military and gymnastic exercises endeavoured to form in it, and as thereby disqualifying it more or less for undergoing the fatigues and encountering the dangers of war. Such occupations were considered as fit only for slaves; and the free citizens of the state were prohibited from exercising them. Even in
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those states where no such prohibition took place, as in Rome and Athens, the great body of the people were in effect excluded from all the trades which are now commonly exercised by the lower sort of the inhabitants of towns. Such trades were, at Athens and Rome, all occupied by the slaves of the rich, who exercised them for the benefit of their masters; whose wealth, power, and protection, made it almost impossible for a poor freeman to find a market for his work, when it came into competition with that of the slaves of the rich. Slaves, however, are very seldom inventive; and all the most important improvements, either in machinery, or in the arrangement and distribution of work, which facilitate and abridge labour, have been the discoveries of freemen. Should a slave propose any improvement of this kind, his master would be very apt to consider the proposal as the suggestion of laziness, and a desire to save his own labour at the master's expence. The poor slave, instead of reward, would probably meet with much abuse, perhaps with some punishment. In the manufactures carried on by slaves, therefore, more labour must generally have been employed to execute the same quantity of work, than in those carried on by freemen. The work of the former must, upon that account, generally have been dearer than that of the latter. The Hungarian mines, it is remarked by Mr

Montesquieu, though not richer, have always been wrought with less expence, and therefore with more profit, than the Turkish mines in their neighbourhood. The Turkish mines are wrought by slaves; and the arms of those slaves are the only machines which the Turks have ever thought of employing. The Hungarian mines are wrought by freemen, who employ a great deal of machinery, by which they facilitate and abridge their own labour. From the very little that is known about the price of manufactures in the times of the Greeks and Romans, it would appear that those of the finer sort were excessively dear. Silk sold for its weight in gold. It was not indeed in those times a European manufacture; and as it was all brought from the East Indies, the distance of the carriage may in some measure account for the greatness of the price. The price, however, which a lady, it is said, would sometimes pay for a piece of very fine linen, seems to have been equally extravagant; and as linen was always either a European, or at farthest an Egyptian manufacture, this high price can be accounted for only by the great expence of the labour which must have been employed about it; and the expence of this labour again could arise from nothing but the awkwardness of the machinery which it made use of. The price of fine woollens, too, though not quite so extravagant, seems however to have been much

much above that of the present times. Some cloths, we are told by Pliny, dyed in a particular manner, cost a hundred denarii, or three pounds six shillings and eight pence, the pound weight. Others dyed in another manner cost a thousand denarii the pound weight, or thirty-three pounds six shillings and eight pence. The Roman pound, it must be remembered, contained only twelve of our avoirdupois ounces. This high price, indeed, seems to have been principally owing to the dye. But had not the cloths themselves been much dearer than any which are made in the present times, so very expensive a dye would not probably have been bestowed upon them. The disproportion would have been too great between the value of the accessory and that of the principal. The price mentioned by the same author of some triclinaria, a sort of woollen pillows or cushions made use of to lean upon as they reclined upon their couches at table, passes all credibility; some of them being said to have cost more than thirty thousand, others more than three hundred thousand, pounds. This high price too is not said to have arisen from the dye. In the dress of the people of fashion of both sexes, there seems to have been much less variety, it is observed by Doctor Arbuthnot, in ancient than in modern times; and the very little variety which we find in that of the ancient statues confirms his observation.

vation. He infers from this, that their dress must upon the whole have been cheaper than ours: but the conclusion does not seem to follow. When the expence of fashionable dress is very great, the variety must be very small. But when, by the improvements in the productive powers of manufacturing art and industry, the expence of any one dress comes to be very moderate, the variety will naturally be very great. The rich not being able to distinguish themselves by the expence of any one dress, will naturally endeavour to do so by the multitude and variety of their dresses.

The greatest and most important branch of the commerce of every nation, is that which is carried on between the inhabitants of the town and those of the country. The inhabitants of the town draw from the country the rude produce which constitutes both the materials of their work and the fund of their subsistence; and they pay for this rude produce by sending back to the country a certain portion of it manufactured and prepared for immediate use. The trade which is carried on between these two different sets of people, consists ultimately in a certain quantity of rude produce exchanged for a certain quantity of manufactured produce. The dearer the latter, therefore, the cheaper the former; and whatever tends in any country to raise the price of manufactured produce,

duce, tends to lower that of the rude produce of the land, and thereby to discourage agriculture. The smaller the quantity of manufactured produce which any given quantity of rude produce, or, what comes to the same thing, which the price of any given quantity of rude produce, is capable of purchasing, the smaller the exchangeable value of that given quantity of rude produce; the smaller the encouragement which either the landlord has to increase its quantity by improving, or the farmer by cultivating the land. Whatever, besides, tends to diminish in any country the number of artificers and manufacturers, tends to diminish the home market, the most important of all markets for the rude produce of the land, and thereby still further to discourage agriculture.

Those systems, therefore, which preferring agriculture to all other employments, in order to promote it, impose restraints upon manufactures and foreign trade, act contrary to the very end which they propose, and indirectly discourage that very species of industry which they mean to promote. They are so far, perhaps, more inconsistent than even the mercantile system. That system, by encouraging manufactures and foreign trade more than agriculture, turns a certain portion of the capital of the society from supporting a more advantageous, to support a less advantageous species

of industry. But still it really and in the end encourages that species of industry which it means to promote. Those agricultural systems, on the contrary, really and in the end discourage their own favourite species of industry.

It is thus that every system which endeavours, either by extraordinary encouragements, to draw towards a particular species of industry a greater share of the capital of the society than what would naturally go to it; or, by extraordinary restraints, to force from a particular species of industry some share of the capital which would otherwise be employed in it; is in reality subversive of the great purpose which it means to promote. It retards, instead of accelerating, the progress of the society towards real wealth and greatness; and diminishes, instead of increasing, the real value of the annual produce of its land and labour.

A. SMITH.

TRADITION.

IT is a rule observed in the law of England, That though the attested copy of a record be good proof, yet the copy of a copy ever so well attested, and by ever so credible witnesses, will not be admitted as a proof in judicature. This is so generally approved as reasonable, and suited to the wisdom and caution to be used in our inquiry after material

rial truths, that I never yet heard of any one that blamed it. This practice, if it be allowable in the decisions of right and wrong, carries this observation along with it, viz. that any testimony, the further off it is from the original truth, the less force and proof it has. The being and existence of the thing itself is what I call the original truth. A credible man vouching his knowledge of it, is a good proof: but if another equally credible do witness it from his report, the testimony is weaker; and a third that attests the hearsay of an hearsay, is yet less considerable. So that in traditional truths, each remove weakens the force of the proof: and the more hands the tradition has successively passed through, the less strength and evidence does it receive from them. This I thought necessary to be taken notice of, because I find amongst some men the quite contrary commonly practised, who look on opinions to gain force by growing older; and what a thousand years since would not, to a rational man, contemporary with the first voucher, have appeared at all probable, is now urged as certain beyond all question, only because several have since, from him, said it one after another. Upon this ground, propositions, evidently false or doubtful enough in their first beginning, come by an inverted rule of probability to pass for authentic truths; and those which found or deserved

ved little credit from the months of their first authors, are thought to grow venerable by age, and are urged as undeniable.

I would not be thought here to lessen the credit and use of history: it is all the light we have in many cases, and we receive from it a great part of the useful truths we have, with a convincing evidence. I think nothing more valuable than the records of antiquity: I wish we had more of them, and more uncorrupted. But this truth itself forces me to say, that no probability can arise higher than its first original. What has no other evidence than the single testimony of one only witness, must stand or fall by his only testimony, whether good, bad, or indifferent; and though cited afterwards by hundreds of others, one after another, is so far from receiving any strength thereby, that it is only the weaker. Passion, interest, inadvertency, mistake of his meaning, and a thousand odd reasons or caprices that mens minds are acted by (impossible to be discovered), may make one man quote another man's words or meaning wrong. He that has but ever so little examined the citations of writers, cannot doubt how little credit the quotations deserve where the originals are wanting; and consequently how much less quotations of quotations can be relied on. This is certain, that what in one age was affirmed upon slight grounds, can never after
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come to be more valid in future ages by being often repeated. But the further still it is from the original, the less valid it is; and has always less force in the mouth or writing of him that last made use of it, than in his from whom he received it.

LOCKE.

TRAVELLING.

IN England, it becomes every day more and more the custom to send young people to travel in foreign countries immediately upon their leaving school, and without sending them to any university. Our young people, it is said, generally return home much improved by their travels. A young man who goes abroad at 17 or 18, and returns home at 21, returns three or four years older than he was when he went abroad; and at that age it is very difficult not to improve a good deal in three or four years. In the course of his travels, he generally acquires some knowledge of one or two foreign languages; a knowledge, however, which is seldom sufficient to enable him either to speak or write them with propriety. In other respects he commonly returns home more conceited, more unprincipled, more dissipated, and more incapable of any serious application either to study or to business, than he could well have become in so short a time had

had he lived at home. By travelling so very young, by spending in the most frivolous dissipation the most precious years of his life at a distance from the inspection and controul of his parents and relations, every useful habit, which the earlier parts of his education might have had some tendency to form in him, instead of being rivetted and confirmed, is almost necessarily either weakened or effaced. Nothing but the discredit into which the universities are allowing themselves to fall, could ever have brought into repute so very absurd a practice as that of travelling at this early period of life. By sending his son abroad, a father delivers himself, at least for some time, from so disagreeable an object as that of a son unemployed, neglected, and going to ruin before his eyes.

A. SMITH.

TRUTH.

TRUTH is either a simple fact, arising immediately from observation and experience, or it is a proposition, arising from the faithful and accurate observance of several facts which have an effect on each other. The first, simple facts or truths, depend on the excellence of our senses; the last, which are principles and propositions, require not only a just and sound sensibility, but

a clear and vigorous understanding. All men are not happy in these respects; very few, perhaps, may be constituted as men ought to be: it may be said therefore, that very few are capable of feeling or discerning truly. Almighty God has ordered this matter, like all other things of importance to the general happiness, not only with equity and wisdom, but with great mercy and goodness. The difference which may be given to our sensibility by every possible cause, while it leaves us the denomination of men, and does not make us monsters or idiots, is never so great as to destroy our apprehensions of truth and falsehood in every thing necessary to our duty and happiness. The circle of our obligations and enjoyments, contracts in proportion to the imperfection of our senses and the weakness of our reason. But the various degrees of understanding which we observe among men, though they are the occasions, are not the causes, of the errors and vices which infest the world.—Objects affect men differently, according as their organisation is more or less just, vigorous, or delicate; and their conclusions, deductions, and propositions, are in some degree different, according to the complection of their understandings. Yet truth varies not according to the various apprehensions and judgments of men. As a tree, or an animal, which may appear with some little difference to men

men whose organs of sight have different capacities, has an existence independent of its effects, and would appear exactly of the same size, quality, and distance, to any multitude of men who were all exactly and accurately formed; so the various causes which affect our sensibility, and give us facts, and the combination of them in propositions, would be exactly the same in minds constructed on the first and perfect plan of nature. The variation in our sensibility, and in our judgments of facts and principles, is just like the variation in the outward appearance of objects; so little, that we all agree, not only in their existence, but in their distance, shape, and quality. Those circumstances are something different, according to the difference of our organs; but the difference is so little as not to diversify our organs. Besides, by experience, and by the use of reason on that experience, we find the occasion in our defects and not in the objects; we find the degree of our defects, and judge accurately of things, by allowing for them. Thus persons of sense and ingenuity judge of outward objects by their effects on different senses, not only nearly, but exactly alike. It would be so with facts and propositions which constitute truth, if men were more improved in the general use of their senses and understandings; and were as skilful in prin-

principles, as they are in the outward forms of animals and trees.

WILLIAMS.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

IT has been said, That to lie, is to hide a truth which ought to be revealed. It follows from this definition, that to conceal a truth you are not obliged to tell, is not lying; but he who, not satisfied in such a case, with not telling the truth, tells the contrary, Does he, or does he not lie? According to the definition, you cannot say he lies; for if he gives counterfeit coin where he owes nothing, he deceives without doubt, but he does not rob.

Two questions present themselves here for examination, both very important. The first, When and how we owe our neighbour the truth, since we do not always owe it? The second, Whether there are cases where we may deceive innocently?

General abstract truth is the most precious of blessings. Without it man is blind; it is the eye of reason. It is by her man learns decency; to be what he ought to be, and to do that which it is right to do; to assist to his true end. Private and individual truth is not always a blessing; it is sometimes a curse, very often a thing indifferent.

The things it imports a man to be acquainted with, and whose knowledge is necessary to his happiness, are not, perhaps, very numerous; but whatsoever their number be, they are his right and belong to him, which he ought to claim where-soever he finds them; and of which he cannot be deprived, without committing the most unjust of all thefts; since it is of those benefits common to all, whose communication does not deprive him, who imparts them, of their enjoyment.

As to truths which are of no use, neither for instruction or practice, how can they be benefits we owe, since they are not even benefits? And since the right is founded on their utility only, where there is no possible utility there can be no right. We may claim land though barren, because we can, nevertheless, dwell thereon; but that an idle tale, indifferent in all respects, and of no consequence to any one, be true or false, no person can be affected by it. In moral order nothing is useless, any more than in physical order. Nothing can be a due which is good for nothing: in order that a thing be a due, it must be, or may be, rendered useful. Thus a truth we owe, must regard justice; and it is profaning the sacred name of truth to apply it to vain matters whose existence is indifferent to all, and whose knowledge is useless to all. Truth, divested of every kind of possible utility, cannot therefore be a duty; and

and consequently he who conceals or disguises it, does not lie.

Not to tell the truth, and to tell a falsity, are two very different things; but from which, however, may result the same effects; for this result is assuredly quite the same whenever the effect is null. In whatsoever truth is indifferent, the contrary error is indifferent also: from whence it follows, that, in such a case, he who deceives in telling the opposite to truth, is not more unjust than he who deceives in not declaring it; for, in the case of useless truths, error is not worse than ignorance. That I think the sand at the bottom of the sea white or red, is of no more importance than to be ignorant of its colour. How is a man unjust in hurting no one, since injustice consists solely in the harm we do our neighbour?

These questions thus decided, cannot yet supply me with a certain application to practice, without much previous explication necessary for making the application with exactness in every case which may offer: for if the obligation to truth is founded solely on its utility, how shall I constitute myself judge of this utility? One's advantage is often another's prejudice; private interest is almost always in opposition to public interest. How will I conduct myself in such a case? Must I sacrifice the interest of the absent to him I am talking with? Must I conceal or reveal a

truth which, benefiting one, hurts another? Must I weigh all in the balance of public good only, or in that of distributive justice; and am I certain of being acquainted with every thing relating to the affair, so as to dispense the instruction I dispose of by the rules of equity? Besides, in examining what I owe others, have I sufficiently examined what I owe myself, what I owe truth for truth's sake? Though I do no harm to another in deceiving him, does it follow I am not hurting myself; and does it suffice never to be unjust, in order to be always innocent?

False speaking is lying only in the intention of deceiving; and the intention of deceiving, far from being always joined to that of hurting, has sometimes a quite contrary end. But to render a lie innocent, it is not sufficient the intention of hurting be not absolute; there must also be a certainty that the error into which we lead those we speak to cannot hurt them, or any one else, in any manner whatsoever. This certainly is very rare and very difficult; very seldom can a lie be perfectly innocent. To lie to one's own advantage, is a cheat; to lie to another's advantage, is a fraud: To lie to do harm, is calumny; this is the worst sort of lies: To lie without profit or prejudice to one's self or others, is not lying, it is fiction.

Fiction, which has a moral object in view, is called

called apologue or fable: and as its object is, or ought to be, no other than disguising useful truths under agreeable and sensible forms; in these cases a man seldom troubles himself about concealing the known lie, which is no more than the garb of truth; and he who gives a fable as a fable, does not lie in any sort.

There are other fictions purely idle: such as the greatest part of stories and romances; which, without containing any real instruction, have no other object than amusement. These, devoid of all moral utility, cannot be rated but by the intention of him who invents them; and whenever he deals them out with affirming them real truths, we can hardly disown they are real lies. Who, nevertheless, has ever been scrupulous on this sort of lies, or who ever seriously reproached those who write them?

To make up a false story to one's advantage, is no less lying than when told to another's prejudice, although the lie is less criminal. To give an advantage to him who ought not to have it, is to disturb the course of justice; falsely to attribute to one's self or neighbour, an act from which praise or blame, inculpation or exculpation, might result, is to do an unjust thing: now, every thing which contrary to truth wounds justice, in whatever manner it be, is a lie. These are the exact

limits: but every thing which, contrary to truth, in no wise concerns justice, is but fiction.

Those which are called obliging lies, are real lies; because imposing, whether to the advantage of another, whether to one's own, is as unjust as to impose to his detriment. Whoever commends or blames, if not true, lies, when any real person is meant. If an imaginary being only is meant, he may say any thing he pleases, and not lie, unless he judges the moral of the fact he invents, and judges falsely; for then, although he does not lie in fact, he lies against moral truth, a hundred times more respectable than that of facts.

ROUSSEAU.

THE TRUTH IS NOT TO BE SPOKEN AT ALL TIMES.

FONTENELLE, guided by the principle of public utility, has defined a lie, The concealing a truth which we ought to divulge. A man, leaving a woman's bed, meets her husband; who cries, Where have you been? What shall he answer? Shall he tell the truth? No, says Fontenelle; because the truth would then be of no use to any one. Now, Truth herself is subject to the public utility. She should preside in the composition of history, and in the study of arts and sciences: she ought to be present with the great, and even to

to snatch from them the veil that hides the faults prejudicial to the public; but she ought never to reveal those that injure none but the man himself. It is afflicting him to no purpose; under the pretence of speaking truth, it is being cruel and brutal; instead of showing a love of truth, it is glorying in another's humiliation.

HELVETIUS.

TYRANNY.

By a tyrant, is meant a sovereign who makes his humour the law; who seizes on his subjects substance, and afterwards inlists them to go and give his neighbours the like treatment. These tyrants are not known in Europe.

Tyranny is distinguished into that of one person and of many; a body invading the rights of other bodies, and corrupting the laws that it may exercise a despotism apparently legal, is the latter tyranny; but Europe likewise has none of these tyrants.

Under which tyranny would you choose to live? Under none; but had I the option, the tyranny of one person appears to me less odious and dreadful than that of many. A despot has always some intervals of good humour; which is never known in an assembly of despots. If a tyrant has done me an injury, there is his mistress, his confessor,

or

or his page, by means of whom I may appease him, and obtain redress; but a set of supercilious tyrants is inaccessible to all applications. If they are not unjust, still they are austere and harsh; and no favours are ever known to come from them.

Under one despot, I need only stand up against a wall when I see him coming by; or prostrate myself, or knock my forehead against the ground, according to the custom of the country: but under a body of perhaps a hundred despots, I may be obliged to repeat this ceremony a hundred times a-day; which is not a little troublesome to those who are not very nimble. Another disagreeable circumstance is, if my farm happens to be in the neighbourhood of one of our great Lords, it is unknown what damages I am obliged to put up with; and if I have a law-suit with a relation of one of their High-mightinesses, it will infallibly go against me. I am very much afraid, that in this world things will come to such a pass, as to have no other option than being either hammer or anvil. Happy he who gets clear of this alternative!

VOLTAIRE.

V.

VACUUM.

V.

THE POWER OF ANNIHILATION PROVES A VACUUM.

THOSE who assert the impossibility of *space* existing without matter, must not only make body infinite, but must also deny a power in God to annihilate any part of matter. No one, I suppose, will deny that God can put an end to all motion that is in matter, and fix all the bodies of the universe in a perfect quiet and rest, and continue them so long as he pleases. Whoever then will allow that God can, during such a general rest, annihilate either this book, or the body of him that reads it, must necessarily admit the possibility of a *vacuum*; for it is evident, that the space that was filled by the parts of the annihilated body will still remain, and be a space without

out body: for the circumambient bodies being in a perfect rest, are a wall of adamant; and in that state make it a perfect impossibility for any other body to get into that space. And indeed the necessary motion of one particle of matter into the place from whence another particle of matter is removed, is but a consequence from the supposition of plenitude, which will therefore need some better proof than a supposed matter of fact, which experiment can never make out; our own clear and distinct ideas plainly satisfying us, that there is no necessary connection between space and solidity, since we can conceive the one without the other. And those who dispute for or against a vacuum, do thereby confess they have distinct ideas of vacuum and plenum, *i. e.* that they have an idea of extension void of solidity, though they deny its existence, or else they dispute about nothing at all. For they who so much alter the signification of words, as to call extension body, and consequently make the whole essence of body to be nothing but pure extension without solidity, must talk absurdly whenever they speak of *vacuum*, since it is impossible for extension to be without extension; for *vacuum*, whether we affirm or deny its existence, signifies space without body; whose very existence no one can deny to be possible, who will not make mat-

ter infinite, and take from God a power to annihilate any particle of it.

LOCKE.

A GENERAL VIEW OF HARTLEY'S DOCTRINE OF VIBRATIONS.

SINCE all sensations and ideas are conveyed to the mind by means of the external senses, or more properly by the nerves belonging to them, sensations, as they exist in the brain, must be such things as are capable of being transmitted by the nerves; and since the nerves and brain are of the same substance, the affection of a nerve during the transmission of a sensation, and the affection of the brain during the perceived presence of it, are probably the same. What sensations or ideas are, as they exist in the *mind*, or *sentient principle*, we have no more knowledge of than we have of the mind or sentient principle itself. Ideas themselves, as they exist in the mind, may be as different from what they are in the brain, as that peculiar difference of texture (or rather, as that difference in the rays of light) which occasions difference of colour, is from the colours themselves, as we conceive of them.

The doctrine of vibrations was suggested by Sir Isaac Newton; though but barely proposed by him at the end of his *Principia*, and in the queries

queries at the end of his Optics, which are here subjoined.

“ Do not rays of light, in falling upon the bottom of the eye, excite vibrations in the tunica retina? Which vibrations, being propagated along the solid fibres of the optic nerves into the brain, cause the sense of seeing. For because dense bodies conserve their heat the longest, the vibrations of their parts are of a lasting nature; and therefore may be propagated along solid fibres of uniform dense matter to a great distance, for conveying into the brain the impressions made upon all the organs of sense. For motion, which can continue long in one and the same part of a body, can be propagated a long way from one part to another, supposing the body homogeneous; so that the motion may not be reflected, refracted, interrupted, or disordered, by any unevenness of the body.”

“ Do not several sorts of rays make vibrations of several bignesses; which, according to their bignesses, excite sensations of several colours, much after the manner that the vibrations of the air according to their several bignesses excite sensations of several sounds?—And particularly, do not the most refrangible rays excite the shortest vibrations for making a sensation of deep violet; the least refrangible the largest, for making
king

“ king a sensation of deep red; and the several
“ intermediate sorts of rays, vibrations of several
“ intermediate bignesses, to make sensations of
“ the several intermediate colours?

Upon these hints Hartley acknowledges that he built his whole system of vibrations, which appear to correspond to all that we know concerning ideas and their affections. This hypothesis does not require that the nerves be *tubes*, or consist of bundles of tubes, for the purpose of containing any fluid; though it is noway inconsistent with the supposition of their being of that structure: It only requires that they be of such a texture, that if their extreme parts be put into a vibratory motion, that motion may be freely propagated to the brain, and be continued there.

Now, that the nerves *may* be of a constitution that will admit of this, cannot be denied, though the structure which this purpose requires be ever so exquisite; especially when it is considered, that all bodies whatever do actually possess this very property, in a greater or less degree, in consequence of their constituent particles not being in actual contact with each other, but kept at a certain distance from one another by a repulsive power. That sensations are transmitted to the brain in the form of vibrations, is rendered very probable from the well-known phenomena of the more perfect senses, as those of seeing and

hearing. That the retina is affected with a tremulous motion, in consequence of the action of the rays of light, is evident from the impression continuing some time and dying away gradually, after the cause of the impression has been removed. It seems certain, that no person can keep his eye fixed on a luminous object and afterwards shut it, and observe how the impression goes off, and imagine that the retina was affected in any other manner than with a tremulous or a vibratory motion. And is it not most probable, not to say certain, that since the impression is actually transmitted to the brain, it must be by means of the same kind of motion by which the extremity of the nerve was affected, that is, a vibratory one? And since the *brain* itself is a continuation of the same substance with the nerves, is it not equally evident, that the affection of the brain corresponding to a sensation, and consequently to an idea, is a vibratory motion of its parts?

Now, since the texture of all the nerves is at least nearly the same, it will follow by analogy, that if any one of them transmit sensations by a vibratory motion of its parts, all the rest do so too. That this is the case with the *auditory* nerve, is probable, independently of any argument of analogy from the optic nerve. For what is more probable and natural, than to imagine that the tremulous motion of the particles of the air, in which

which sound consists, must, since it acts by successive impulses, communicate a tremulous motion to the particles of the auditory nerve, and that the same tremulous motion is propagated to the brain, and diffused into it? It is not necessary to suppose that the vibrations of the particles of the air and those of the particles of the nerves are *synchronous*, since even the vibration of a musical string will affect another an octave above or an octave below it.

That vibrations, corresponding to all the varieties of sensations and ideas that ever take place in any human mind, may take place in the same brain at the same time, can create no difficulty to any person who considers the capacity of the air itself to transmit different vibrations, without limits, at the same instant of time. In a concert, in which ever so many instruments are employed, a person skilled in music is able to attend to which of them all he pleases. At the same time ever so many persons may be speaking, and sounds of other kinds may be made, each of which is transmitted without any interruption from the rest. How infinitely complex must be the vibration of the air a little above the streets of such a city as London: and yet there can be no doubt but that each sound has its proper effect, and might be attended to separately by an ear sufficiently exquisite. That vibrations which are nearly isochronous af-

fect and modify one another, so as to become perfectly so, sufficiently corresponds to the phenomena of ideas, and therefore makes no objection to this doctrine.

The differences of which vibrations affecting the brain are sufficient to correspond to all the differences which we observe in our original ideas or sensations. The difference in the *degree* of vibration corresponding to the same sound made weaker or stronger, is considerable. The difference in *kind* corresponding to the difference of tone, is still more considerable. And, further, one vibration in the brain may be distinguished from another by its *place*, in consequence of its principally affecting a particular region of the brain, and also in its *line of direction*, as entering by a particular nerve.

If these original differences in vibrations are sufficient to correspond to all the varieties of our original and *simple* ideas, the combinations of them must be equal in both cases; so that the number of *complex ideas* creates no peculiar difficulty. In fact, however, some mechanical affection of the nerves and brain must necessarily correspond to all our sensations and ideas.

Besides the four differences abovementioned, which alone are insisted on by Hartley, there may be a further difference in the *constitution of the nerves* belonging to the different senses; or there
may

may be so many circumstances that affect or modify their vibrations, that they may be as distinguishable from one another as different human voices sounding the same note; and probably no two individuals of the human race can sound the same note so much alike, as that they could not be distinguished from one another.

There will be no great difficulty in conceiving, that, in a substance not *fluid* like the air, but solid, though soft, like the brain, a vibration affecting any part of it will leave that part disposed to vibrate in that particular manner rather than in any other; so that a *second impression* of the same may be distinguished from a *first*: which may in some measure explain the difference between a new sensation, and the repetition of an old one. But these are chiefly distinguishable from one another by the difference of their *associations*, both with other ideas, and with a different state of the mind or brain in a variety of respects.

Also one vibration having been sufficiently impressed, it may be conceived that the region of the brain affected by it will retain a disposition to the same vibrations in preference to others: so that these vibrations may take place from other causes than the original one. But these vibrations will necessarily differ considerably in strength and other circumstances from original vibrations; which provides for the difference between the

ideas of present objects, and the same idea excited without the presence of the object. Thus circles of colours may be excited by pressing the eye with the finger, and by other causes; which, however, are easily distinguished from a similar affection of the retina by the impression of rays of light.

If it be said, that these vibrations in the brain, differing chiefly in degree, might be liable to be mistaken for one another; it may be answered, that, in fact, mankind are subject to fallacies and mistakes from this source; very vivid ideas actually imposing upon the mind, so that they are mistaken for realities, as in dreams and reveries, especially in cases of madness. This supposition of the particles of the brain retaining a disposition to vibrate as they have formerly vibrated, will be rendered more probable from considering that all solid substances seem to retain a disposition to continue in any state before impressed. For this reason, a bow of any kind that has been bent, does not restore itself to the same form that it had before, but leans a little to the other, in consequence of the spheres of attraction and repulsion belonging to the several particles having been altered by the change of their situation. Something similar to this may take place with respect to the brain.

The phenomena of vibrations correspond happily enough to the difference between pleasure-able

able and painful sensations; because they seem to differ only in degree, and to pass insensibly into one another. Thus a moderate degree of warmth is pleasure, and the pleasure increases with the heat to a certain degree, at which it begins to be painful; and beyond this the pain increases with a degree of heat, just as the pleasure had done before. Hartley conjectures, and it seems probable enough, that the limit of pleasure and pain is the *solution of continuity* in the particles of the nerves and brain occasioned by the vigorous vibrations which accompany the sense of pain.

If it be admitted, that vibrations in the brain may accompany and be the cause of all our ideas, there remains only one property of ideas, or rather of the mind relating to them; to which, if the doctrine of vibrations can be supposed to correspond, the whole theory will be established; and that is, the *association of ideas*. For this single property comprehends all the other affections of our ideas, and thereby accounts for all the phenomena of the human mind, and what we usually call its different operations with respect to sensations and ideas of every kind.

Now, if two different vibrations take place in the brain at the same time, it cannot be but they will a little alter or modify one another, so that the particles of the medullary substance will not vibrate precisely as they would have done if they had

had taken place separately; but each of them will vibrate as acted upon by two impulses at the same time: and all the particles being acted upon in the same manner, it necessarily follows, that if, from any cause whatever, one of these vibrations shall be excited, the other will be excited also: so that the whole state of the brain will exactly resemble what it was before: and this seems to correspond sufficiently to the recollection of one idea by means of another.

This theory of Dr Hartley's makes it probable that the Creator hath formed a mass of matter like the brain with such exquisite powers, with respect to vibrations, as is sufficient for all the purposes abovementioned; though the particulars of its constitution, and mode of affection, may far exceed our comprehension; but which may be further improved by those who are conversant in medical and anatomical inquiries.

It may stagger, indeed, some persons, that so much of the business of thinking should be made to depend upon mere *matter*, as the doctrine of vibrations supposes. For, in fact, it leaves nothing to the province of any other principle except the simple power of *perception*: so that if it were possible that matter could be endued with this property, *immateriality*, as far as it has been supposed to belong to man, would be excluded altogether.

PRIESTLEY.

No

NO ACTION VICIOUS UNLESS INJURIOUS
TO SOCIETY.

AN action not mischievous to any body, neither actually nor probably, directly nor consequentially, is no sin. To talk of an action mischievous to God, is impiety and nonsense. An action mischievous to a *man's self* alone is no *sin*, but a piece of folly; and all that is to be said of it is, he must bear the consequences. An action mischievous to *others* is indeed a sin, and as such it must continue: all pretences of making it as if it had never been, are as vain as they are pernicious; it must go to the bad side of a man's character, and there remain: there is but one way of making up for it, which is, to do another as profitable to society as that is mischievous.

The whole affair of atonements is, as Bishop Warburton, after Plutarch, calls it, a foolish business, the dependence of the superstitious. The Almighty, according to Lord Kames, who deems it "the most important of all truths," admits of no composition for sin. A notion, says he, prevailed in the darker ages of the world, of a substitute in punishment, who undertakes the debt, and suffers the punishment that another merits. Traces of this opinion are found in the religious ceremonies of the ancient Egyptians, and other

other heathen nations. Among them, the conceptions of a Deity were gross, and those of morality not less so. * *

V I R T U E.

WHAT is virtue? Doing good to others. How can I give the name of virtue to any one but to him who does me good? I am in want, you relieve me; I am in danger, you come to my assistance; I have been deceived, you tell me the truth; I am ill used, you comfort me; I am ignorant, you instruct me: I must say, then, you are virtuous. But what will become of the cardinal and theological virtues? Let them ever remain in the schools.

What is your temperance to me? It is no more than an observance of a rule of health: you will be the better for it; and much good may it do you. If you have faith and hope, better still; they will procure you eternal life. Your theological virtues are heavenly gifts; and those you call *cardinal*, are excellent qualities for your guidance in life; but relatively to your neighbour, they are no virtues. The prudent man does good to himself; the virtuous to men in general. Very well was it said by St Paul, that charity is better than faith and hope.

But how! are no virtues to be admitted but those

those by which others are benefited? No indeed. We live in a society; consequently, there is nothing truly good to us, but what is for the good of such society. If a hermit is sober and devout, and, among other mortifications, wears a sackcloth shirt; such a one I set down as a saint: But before I shall style him *virtuous*, let him do some act of virtue which will promote the well-being of his fellow-creatures. Whilst he lives by himself, to us he is neither good nor bad; he is nothing. If St Bruno reconciled families, and relieved the indigent, he was virtuous; if he prayed and fasted in the desert, he was a saint. Among men virtue is a mutual exchange of kindnesses; and whoever declines such exchanges ought not to be reckoned a member of society. Were that saint to live in the world, probably he would do good in it; but whilst he keeps out of it, the world will only do his saintship justice in not allowing him to be virtuous. He may be good to himself, but not to us.

But, say you, if a hermit be given to drunkenness, sensuality, and private debauchery, he is a vicious man; consequently, with the opposite qualities, he is virtuous. That is what I cannot come into. If he has those faults, he is a very filthy man; but with regard to society, as it is not hurt by his infamies, he is not vicious, wicked, or deserving of punishment. It is to be presumed, that
were

were he to return into society, he would do much harm, and prove a very bad man. Of this there is a greater probability, than that the temperate and chaste hermit will be a good man; for in public life faults increase, and good qualities diminish.

A much stronger objection is, that Nero, Pope Alexander VI. and other such monsters, did some good things. I take upon me to answer, that when they did so they were virtuous.

Some divines, so far from allowing that excellent emperor Antoninus to have been a good man, represent him as a conceited Stoic, who, besides ruling over men, coveted their esteem; that in all the good he did to mankind, his own reputation was the end; that his justice, application, and benevolence, proceeded purely from vanity; and that his virtues were a downright imposition on the world. At this I cannot forbear crying out, O! my God, be pleased, in thy goodness, often to give us such hypocrites.

VOLTAIRE.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

VIRTUE consists in the knowledge of what men owe to each other; and consequently supposes the formation of societies. Before this formation, what good or evil could be done to

a Society not yet existing? A man of the woods, a man naked and without language, might easily acquire a clear idea of strength and weakness, but not of justice and equity. — A man born in a desert island, and abandoned to himself, would live there without vice or virtue. He could not exercise either of them. What, then, are we to understand by the words *virtuous* and *vicious*? Actions useful or detrimental to society.

Virtue is nothing more than the desire of public happiness. The general welfare is the object of virtue; and the actions it enjoins, are the means it employs to accomplish that object. The idea of virtue must, therefore, be every where the same. — If in various ages and countries men appear to have formed different ideas of virtue; if philosophers have, in consequence, treated the idea of virtue as arbitrary, it is because they have taken for virtue itself the several means it makes use of to accomplish its object; that is to say, the several actions it enjoins. These actions have certainly been sometimes very different, because the interests of nations change; and, lastly, because the public good may, to a certain degree, be promoted by different means. — The word *virtue* frequently excites in the mind very different ideas, according to our state and situation, the society in which we live, and the age and country in which we were born. If a younger brother, according

to the custom of Normandy, should avail himself, like Jacob, of the hunger or thirst of the elder, to divest him of his primogeniture, he would be declared a cheat by all the tribunals. If a man, by the example of David, should cause the husband of his mistress to be sacrificed, he would be reckoned, not among the number of the virtuous, but of villains. It would be to little purpose to say he made a good end; assassins sometimes do the same, but are never proposed as models of virtue.

—The entrance of foreign merchandise, permitted to-day in Germany, as advantageous to its commerce and conformable to the good of the state, may be to-morrow forbid. To-morrow the purchaser may be declared criminal, if by some circumstances that purchase become prejudicial to the national interest. The same actions may, therefore, become successively useful and prejudicial to a nation, and merit by turns the name of *virtuous* and *vicious*, without the idea of virtue suffering any change, or ceasing to be the same.

HELVETIUS.

FALSITY OF HUMAN VIRTUES.

WHEN the Duke de Rochefoucault had published his *Thoughts on Self-Love*, one M. Esprit, of the Oratory, wrote a captious book, intitled the *Falsity of Human Virtues*. This genius says there

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is no such thing as virtue; but at the close of every chapter, kindly refers his readers to Christian charity: So that, according to M. Esprit, neither Cato, nor Aristides, nor Marcus Aurelius, nor Epictetus, were good men; and a good reason why, these are only found among Christians. Again, among Christians, the Catholics are the only virtuous; and among the Catholics the Jesuits, enemies to the Oratorians, should have been excepted: therefore there is scarce any virtue on earth but among the enemies of the Jesuits.

This Sieur Esprit sets out with saying, That prudence is not a virtue; and his reason is, because it is often mistaken: which is as much as to say, Caesar was nothing of a soldier, because he had the worst of it at Dyrachium.

Had this reverend gentleman been a philosopher, he would not have treated of prudence as a virtue, but as a talent, a happy and useful quality; for a villain may be very prudent, and I have known such. The madness of pretending that virtue is the portion only of us and our partisans!

What is virtue, my friend? It is doing good. Do me some, and that is enough; as for your motive, that you may keep to yourself. How! According to you, there is no difference between the President de Thou and Ravallac; between Cicero and that wretch Popilius, whose life he

had saved, and who yet hired himself to cut off his head. You will pronounce Epictetus and Porphyry to be rascals, because they did not hold with our doctrines. Such insolence is quite shocking; but I have done, lest I grow warm.

VOLTAIRE.

VIRTUE AND VICE.

VIRTUE is not a mere name. But to this name different men annex different ideas. Hence the different explications of philosophers and their different doctrines.—All, however, seem to agree in the following points: 1. That virtue is the source of good actions, tending to general utility; and that a virtuous man has a propensity to good actions. 2. That virtue is a noble, respectable quality in man; that the virtuous man is estimable. 3. Virtue requires to love what is good and right; the virtuous man does with pleasure, and out of propensity, what is right. 4. But every propensity or inclination to do what is good, is not virtue; it is not a transitory and changeable, but a constant propensity to good, that makes a man virtuous: And perfect virtue is a propensity towards performing all the different kinds of good actions.

Virtue, thence, is a predominant propensity to do what is right; or it consists in a strength of mind

mind to follow, in preference to any other motive, the knowledge of what is right.

Virtue, consequently, implies more than *innocence*. A propensity to good, grounded merely on the *fear of punishment*, or on *selfish views*, and rendered active by such motives, is not virtue; neither is a *blind inclination*, without any distinct view, to be named *virtus*.

How does honesty stand in comparison with virtue? Though it is allowed by all, that the *vir probus*, or what we call the honest man, the man of character, must possess virtue, and that the virtuous is an honest man; still it seems, that men observe some difference when they praise his integrity or honesty, and when they praise his virtue. Virtue seems more properly to show itself by exertion, and is only esteemed according to the actions of a man: whereas honesty (integrity) shows itself already in sentiments and principles, according to which a man determines the value of actions.

There is but one virtue: This has its foundation in the propensity seated in the heart of a man. Where this inclination, or propensity, is wanting, there is not virtue, notwithstanding all external appearance. Not every inclination to do a good action, nor every good action performed, is virtue: Virtue requires a predominant propensity to follow what is acknowledged to be right.

Virtue cannot be estimated from actions alone ; it depends likewise on internal sentiments.

Vice, or a vicious character, consists in the propensity to act against what is known to the agent to be wrong ; in the promptitude or thought of mind to be led by bad motives to act against good ones.

Viciousness, therefore, first, supposes knowledge. Vices committed from ignorance, do not prove viciousness of character. Ignorance may be culpable, since it may be the consequence of viciousness : but a person may act wrong without being conscious of it ; he may even think such actions to be good or indifferent, and desist from them as soon as he knows them to be bad. In this case, his propensity is not yet vice.

Secondly, It consists in some predominant passion. Suggestions of passion to which a man does not yield, but resists from the recollection of his principles or the prevalence of a stronger feeling ; single bad actions, without the habit, which show only that man may err ; do not prove a man to be vicious. But, on the other side, a man may be bad, be of a depraved character, have strong internal propensities to vice, though there has not yet appeared any thing criminal in his external conduct.

Thirdly, A predominant propensity to do things, though known to be bad, shows viciousness.—

But

But there are degrees of honesty, as well as of depravity or vice. **FEDER.**

VIRTUOUS.

THE title of *virtuous* can only be given to those who are in the habit of doing virtuous actions; because it is not one single honest action, more than one single ingenious idea, that will gain us the title of virtuous and witty. There is not that penurious wretch on earth, who has not once behaved with generosity; nor a liberal person, who has not once been parsimonious; no villain, who has not done a good action; no person so stupid, who has not uttered one smart sentence; and, in fine, no man who, on inspecting certain actions of his life, will not seem possessed of all the opposite virtues and vices.

HELVETIUS.

VIRTUOUS MAN.

THE virtuous man is not he who sacrifices his pleasures, habits, and strongest passions, to the public welfare; since it is impossible that such a man should exist. He, who to be virtuous must always conquer his inclinations, must necessarily be a wicked man. The meritorious virtues are never certain and infallible virtues. In the Haram,

ram, it is not to the meritorious virtues, but to impotency, that the Grand Seignior instructs his women. It is impossible, in practice, for a man to deliver himself up, in a manner, daily to a war with the passions, without losing many battles. The virtuous man is he whose strongest passion is so conformable to the general interest, that he is almost constantly necessitated to be virtuous. For this reason, he approaches nearer to perfection, and has a greater claim to the name of being a virtuous man, who requires stronger motives of pleasure, and a more powerful interest, in order to determine him to do a bad action, than are necessary to his performing a good one; and consequently supposes that he has a greater passion for virtue than for vice.

Cæsar was, without doubt, not the most virtuous among the Romans; yet if he would not renounce the title of a good citizen, without taking that of the master of the world, we have not a right to banish him from the class of virtuous men. In fact, among the virtuous, who really deserve that title, how few are there who, if placed in the same circumstances as Cæsar was, would refuse the sceptre of the world; especially if, like Cæsar, they thought they had those superior talents that secure the success of great enterprises? Less abilities would, perhaps, render them better citizens; and a moderate degree of virtue, supported by

by a greater anxiety for the success, would be sufficient to deter them from engaging in so bold a project. Indeed, sometimes a want of talents preserves us from vice; and frequently to the same defect we owe all our virtues.

We are, on the contrary, less virtuous as less powerful motives lead us to the commission of a crime. Such, for instance, is that of some of the Emperors of Morecco, who, solely from the motive of making a parade of their dexterity, would with one blow of a sabre, in mounting a horse, cut off the head of the groom who held the stirrup.

This is what distinguishes the virtuous from the vicious man, in a manner the most clear, precise, and conformable to experience. On this plan the public might make an exact thermometer, which would show the various degrees of virtue and vice in each citizen, if, by penetrating to the bottom of the heart, we could discover there the value each sets on virtue. But the impossibility of arriving at this knowledge, forces us to judge of men only by their actions; a judgment extremely faulty in every particular, but, on the whole, sufficiently conformable to the general interest, and almost as useful as if it were just.

HELVETIUS.

CHA-

CHARACTER OF THE VIRTUOUS MAN.

VIRTUE, considered by itself, is a propensity of the heart. But what qualities are, besides this propensity, required for true virtue? In what consists the whole character of the virtuous man? Does virtue require certain mental faculties (qualities of the intellect); or are mental qualities indifferent, if only the heart be good? Is a certain exterior, or a certain situation with regard to fortune, required for virtue? Ought the virtuous man to be low, poor, and despised; and ought his appearance to be melancholy, sad, and miserable? All these questions are easily answered, if the true definition of virtue be properly considered.

From the connexion of the will and the intellect, it already appears, that intellect is by no means indifferent to virtue: and it is thus principally that virtue distinguishes itself, not only as a *reasonable goodness* (good will and benevolence) from what is commonly called a *good heart*; but likewise as a wise *general love of good*, from *enthusiasm*.

It hence, likewise, appears, in what relation *wisdom* and *virtue* stand to each other. It would be against generally adopted notions, if one were to say, that virtue may consist with folly, and wisdom with viciousness. Wisdom, however, and
virtue

virtue are, notwithstanding, not synonymous: Wisdom is rather grounded on intellectual qualities which lead the will to good; virtue is an inclination of the heart, but founded on a wise manner of thinking.

FELDER.

TRAITS OF THE PERFECT CHARACTER OF A
WISE, VIRTUOUS, OR AN HONEST GOOD
MAN.

ANTONINE, xi. 19. says, The virtuous, the true wise man, distinguishes himself, not by a peculiar dress, not by single actions, words, and gestures, but by his whole conduct. *One* view must appear in all his actions; the view to do as much good by his existence as possible.

He is not merely a good citizen, a faithful husband, and serviceable friend: he is a philanthropist.

Fore-sight and prudence, in the whole of his conduct, keeps him equally distant from enthusiasm, which clouds the judgment, as from levity.

He studies his duties, in order to execute them.

He will not be without fault, because he is a man; but he will never be indifferent about his faults. He will not indulge, let take root, or be governed by bad passions or inclinations, under the
name

name of *weaknesses*; but he will be active against indulging them: he will hasten to mend his committed errors; they will redouble his ardour; they will render him more attentive to himself.

The consciousness of his own imperfection will render him modest and indulgent with regard to others; but hard and severe against himself.

After a good action, which had cost him some trouble, he will not be negligent for a long time, as if he had done enough: Neither will he lose his spirits if, perhaps, his good intentions are now and then not crowned with success. He examines and inquires into the principles which he follows in his conduct; they are good and just, and he is constant to them. He is satisfied with the good intentions of his actions, though their utility is not always conspicuous or publicly acknowledged.

FEDER.

VOLITION.

[ALL the knowledge I have of volition, is deduced from a sense of my own; and the understanding is known no better. When I am asked, What is the cause that determines my will? I ask, in my turn, What is the cause that determines my judgment? For it is clear, that these two causes make but one; and if we conceive that

man

man is active in forming his judgment of things; that his understanding is only a power of comparing and judging, we shall see that his liberty is only a similar power, or one derived from this: he chooses the good as he judges of the true; and for the same reason as he deduces a false judgment, he makes a bad choice. What then is the cause which determines his will? It is his judgment. And what is the cause which determines his judgment? It is his intelligent faculty, power of judging; the determining power lies in himself. If we go beyond this point, I know nothing of the matter.—Not that I can suppose myself at liberty not to will my own good, or to will my own evil: but my liberty consists in this very circumstance, that I am incapable to will any thing but what is useful to me, or at least what appears so, without any foreign object interfering in my determination. Does it follow from hence, that I am not my own master, because I am incapable of assuming another being, or of divesting myself of what is essential to my existence?

The principle of all action lies in the will of a free being; we can go no further in search of its source. It is not the word *liberty* that has no signification; it is that of *necessity*. To suppose any act or effect which is not derived from an

active principle, is, indeed, to suppose effects without a cause. Either there is no first impulse; or every first impulse can have no prior cause; nor can there be any such thing as will without liberty. Man is therefore a free agent.

ROUSSEAU.

U.

U.

THE HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.

THE peculiar manner in which we form ideas, is that which constitutes the genius and character of the mind. To form our ideas of things on their actual relations only, betokens a solid understanding: whereas, to be contented with their apparent relations, betrays a superficial one. To conceive these relations as they really exist, displays a right judgment; to conceive mistaken notions of them, denotes a wrong one. Those who see imaginary relations, that have neither reality

ality nor appearance, are madmen; while those who make no comparison between them, are idiots. The less or greater aptitude to compare these ideas and discover such relations, is what constitutes a greater or less degree of genius or understanding.

ROUSSEAU.

THE CONDUCT OF THE UNDERSTANDING
IN THE ORDINARY COURSE OF HUMAN
ACTIONS.

IF we consider the ordinary course of human actions, we shall find that the mind restrains not itself by any general and universal rules; but acts on most occasions as it is determined by its present motives and inclinations. As each action is a particular individual event, it must proceed from particular principles, and from our immediate situation within ourselves, and with respect to the rest of the universe. If, on some occasions, we extend our motives beyond those very circumstances which gave rise to them, and form something like *general rules* for our conduct, it is easy to observe, that these rules are not inflexible, but allow of many exceptions. Were men, therefore, to take the liberty of acting with regard to the laws of society, and its essential duties, as they

they do in every other affair, they would conduct themselves on most occasions by particular judgments, and would take into consideration the characters and circumstances of the persons, as well as the general nature of the question. But it is easy to see, that this would produce an infinite confusion in human society; and that the avidity and partiality of men would quickly bring disorder into the world, if not restrained by some general and inflexible principles. It was, therefore, with a view to this inconvenience that men have established those principles, and have agreed to restrain themselves by general rules, which are unchangeable by spite or favour, and by particular views of public or private interest. These rules, therefore, are artificially invented for a certain purpose, and are contrary to the common principles of human nature which accommodate themselves to circumstances, and have no stated invariable method of operation.

HUME.

THE PROGRESS OF THE HUMAN UNDERSTANDING.

THE human understanding proceeds at a slow and gradual pace. Its infancy is employed in the cultivation of painting, sculpture, and architecture,

ture, which may be called the agreeable arts; and in the study and profession of poetry and music, which we may style an exertion of frivolous talents. A taste for discussion follows at some distance, and is attended by a subtilty of reasoning, a spirit of controversy, and a logomachia; till, all opinions becoming equally false and equally specious, reason, fatigued with floating in uncertainty, embraces the side of doubt and experiment; and thus forms by little and little the true and the last philosophy.

CHATELLUR.

THE CAUSES OF THE DIFFERENCE IN HUMAN UNDERSTANDINGS.

WHEN we have lived any time, and have been accustomed to the uniformity of nature, we acquire a general habit, by which we always transfer the known to the unknown, and conceive the latter to resemble the former. By means of this general habitual principle, we regard even one experiment as the foundation of reasoning, and expect a similar event with some degree of certainty, where the experiment has been made accurately, and free from all foreign circumstances. It is, therefore, considered as a matter of great importance to observe the consequences of things; and

and as one man may very much surpass another in attention, and memory, and observation, this will make a very great difference in their reasoning. Where there is a complication of causes to produce any effect, one mind may be much larger than another, and better able to comprehend the whole system of objects, and to infer justly their consequences. One man is able to carry on a chain of consequences to a greater length than another. Few men can think long without running into a confusion of ideas, and mistaking one for another; and there are various degrees of this infirmity.

The circumstance on which the effect depends is frequently involved in other circumstances, which are foreign and extrinsic. The separation of it often requires great attention, accuracy, and subtilty. The forming general maxims from particular observation, is a very nice operation; and nothing is more usual, from haste or a narrowness of mind, which sees not on all sides, than to commit mistakes in this particular. When we reason from analogies, the man who has the greater experience, or the greater promptitude of suggesting analogies, will be the better reasoner.

Biaſes from prejudice, education, passion, party, &c. hang more upon one mind than another. After we have acquired a confidence in human testimony, books and conversation enlarge much more

more the sphere of one man's experience than those of another.

HUME.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

THE difference between the common person and the person of genius, is chiefly seen in the more or less depth of the principles on which they found their ideas. With most men every judgment is particular; they do not extend their views to universal propositions; to them every general idea is obscure. All therefore who are of a limited understanding, are continually depreciating or decrying those whose understandings are equally solid and comprehensive. They accuse them of too much refinement, and of thinking with regard to every particular in too abstracted a manner. We will never allow that a thing is just, when it is beyond our weak comprehension.

HUME.

UNIFORMITY AND VARIETY.

IN things of Nature's workmanship, whether we regard their internal or external structure, beauty and design are equally conspicuous. We shall begin with the outside of Nature, as what first presents itself.

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The figure of an organic body is generally regular. The trunk of a tree, its branches, and their ramifications, are nearly round, and form a series regularly decreasing from the trunk to the smallest fibre: uniformity is no where more remarkable than in the leaves, which, in the same species, have all the same colour, size, and shape; the seeds and fruits are all regular figures, approaching for the most part to the globular form. Hence a plant, especially of the larger kind, with its trunk, branches, foliage, and fruit, is a charming object.

In an animal, the trunk, which is much larger than the other parts, occupies a chief place. Its shape, like that of the stem of plants, is nearly round; a figure which of all is the most agreeable. Its two sides are precisely similar: several of the under parts go off in pairs; and the two individuals of each pair are accurately uniform. The single parts are placed in the middle; the limbs, bearing a certain proportion to the trunk, serve to support it, and to give it a proper elevation; upon one extremity are disposed the neck and head, in the direction of the trunk: the head being the chief part, possesses with great propriety the chief place. Hence the beauty of the whole figure is the result of many equal and proportional parts orderly disposed; and the smallest varia-

tion in number, equality, proportion, or order, never fails to produce a perception of deformity.

Nature in no particular seems more profuse of ornament, than in the beautiful colouring of her works. The flowers of plants, the furs of beasts, and the feathers of birds, vie with each other in the beauty of their colours; which in lustre as well as in harmony are beyond the power of imitation. Of all natural appearances, the colouring of the human face is the most exquisite; it is the strongest instance of the ineffable art of nature, in adapting and proportioning its colours to the magnitude, figure, and position of the parts. In a word, colour seems to live in nature only, and to languish under the finest touches of art.

When we examine the internal structure of a plant or animal, a wonderful subtilty of mechanism is displayed. Man, in his mechanical operations, is confined to the surface of bodies; but the operations of nature are exerted through the whole substance, so as to reach even the elementary parts. Thus the body of an animal and that of a plant are composed of certain great vessels; these of smaller; and these again of still smaller, without end, as far as we can discover. This power of diffusing mechanism through the most intimate parts is peculiar to nature; and distinguishes her operations most remarkably from every work of art. Such texture, continued from the grosser

grosser parts to the most minute, preserves all along the strictest regularity: the fibres of plants are a bundle of cylindric canals, lying in the same direction, and parallel or nearly parallel to each other: in some instances, a most accurate arrangement of parts is discovered, as in onions; formed of concentric coats, one within another to the very centre. An animal body is still more admirable in the disposition of its internal parts, and in their order and symmetry; there is not a bone, a muscle, a blood-vessel, a nerve, that hath not one corresponding to it on the opposite side; and the same order is carried through the most minute parts. The lungs are composed of two parts, which are disposed upon the sides of the thorax; and the kidneys, in a lower situation, have a position not less orderly. As to the parts that are single, the heart is advantageously situated near the middle: the liver, stomach, and spleen, are disposed in the upper region of the abdomen, about the same height; the bladder is placed in the middle of the body, as well as the intestinal canal, which fills the whole cavity with its convolutions.

The mechanical power of nature, not confined to small bodies, reaches equally those of the greatest size; witness the bodies that compose the solar system, which, however large, are weighed, measured, and subjected to certain laws, with the utmost

utmost accuracy. Their places round the sun, with their distances, are determined by a precise rule, corresponding to their quantity of matter. The superior dignity of the central body, in respect of its bulk and lucid appearance, is suited to the place it occupies. The globular figure of these bodies, is not only in itself beautiful, but is above all others fitted for regular motion. Each planet revolves about its own axis in a given time; and each moves round the sun, in an orbit nearly circular, and in a time proportioned to its distance. Their velocities, directed by an established law, are perpetually changing by regular accelerations and retardations. In fine, the great variety of regular appearances, joined with the beauty of the system itself, cannot fail to produce the highest delight in every one who is sensible of design, power, or beauty.

Nature hath a wonderful power of connecting systems with each other, and of propagating that connection through all her works. Thus the constituent parts of a plant, the roots, the stem, the branches, the leaves, the fruit, are really different systems, united by a mutual dependence on each other: in an animal, the lymphatic and lacteal ducts, the blood-vessels and nerves, the muscles and glands, the bones and cartilages, the membranes and bowels, with the other organs, form distinct systems, which are united into one whole.

There are at the same time other connections less intimate. Every plant is joined to the earth by its roots; it requires rain and dews to furnish it with juices, and it requires heat to preserve these juices in fluidity and motion. Every animal by its gravity is connected with the earth; with the element in which it breathes; and with the sun, by deriving from it cherishing and enlivening heat. The earth furnishes aliment to plants, these to animals, and these again to other animals, in a long train of dependence. That the earth is part of a greater system, comprehending many bodies mutually attracting each other, and gravitating all towards one common centre, is now thoroughly explored. Such a regular and uniform series of connections propagated through so great a number of beings, and through such wide spaces, is wonderful; and our wonder must increase, when we observe these connections propagated from the minutest atoms to bodies of the most enormous size, and so widely diffused, as that we can neither perceive their beginning nor their end. That these connections are not confined within our own planetary system, is certain; they are diffused over spaces still more remote, where new bodies and systems rise without end. All space is filled with the works of God, which are conducted by one plan, to answer unerringly one great end.

But the most wonderful connection of all, though not the most conspicuous, is that of our internal frame with the works of nature: man is obviously fitted for contemplating these works, because in this contemplation he has great delight. The works of nature are remarkable in their uniformity not less than in their variety; and the mind of man is fitted to receive pleasure equally from both. Uniformity and variety are interwoven in the works of nature with surprising art. Variety, however great, is never without some degree of uniformity; nor the greatest uniformity without some degree of variety. There is great variety in the same plant, by the different appearances of its stem, branches, leaves, blossoms, fruit, size, and colour; and yet when we trace that variety through different plants, especially of the same kind, there is discovered a surprising uniformity. Again, where nature seems to have intended the most exact uniformity, as among individuals of the same kind, there still appears a diversity, which serves readily to distinguish one individual from another. It is indeed admirable, that the human visage, in which uniformity is so prevalent, should yet be so marked, as to leave no room among millions for mistaking one person for another; these marks, though clearly perceived, are generally so delicate, that words cannot be found to describe them. A correspondence

respondence so perfect between the human mind and the works of nature is extremely remarkable. The opposition between variety and uniformity is so great, that one would not readily imagine they could both be relished by the same palate; at least not in the same object, nor at the same time: it is however true, that the pleasures they afford being happily adjusted to each other, and readily mixing in intimate union, are frequently produced by the same individual object. Nay, further, in the objects that touch us the most, uniformity and variety are constantly combined; witness natural objects, where this combination is always found in perfection. Hence it is, that natural objects readily form themselves into groups, and are agreeable in whatever manner combined: a wood with its trees, shrubs, and herbs, is agreeable; the music of birds, the lowing of cattle, and the murmuring of a brook, are in conjunction delightful; though they strike the ear without modulation or harmony. In short, nothing can be more happily accommodated to the inward constitution of man, than that mixture of uniformity with variety which the eye discovers in natural objects; and accordingly the mind is never more highly gratified than in contemplating a natural landscape.

LORD KAMES.

UNIFORMITY AND VARIETY, CONSIDERED
WITH RELATION TO THE FINE ARTS.

IN general, in every work of art, it must be agreeable to find that degree of variety which corresponds to the natural course of our perceptions; and that an excess in variety or in uniformity must be disagreeable, by varying that natural course. For this reason, works of art admit more or less variety according to the nature of the subject. In a picture of an interesting event, that strongly attaches the spectator to a single object, the mind relishes not a multiplicity of figures nor of ornaments: a picture, again, representing a gay subject, admits great variety of figures and ornaments; because these are agreeable to the mind in a cheerful tone. The same observation is applicable to poetry and to music.

It must be at the same time remarked, that one can bear a greater variety of natural objects than of objects in a picture; and a greater variety in a picture, than in a description. A real object presented to view, makes an impression more readily than when represented in colours, and much more readily than when represented in words. Hence it is, that the profuse variety of objects in some natural landscapes neither breed confusion nor fatigue; and for the same reason, there

there is place for greater variety of ornament in a picture than in a poem. A picture however, like a building, ought to be so simple as to be comprehended in one view. Whether every one of Le Brun's pictures of Alexander's history will stand the test, is submitted to judges.

From these general observations we proceed to particulars. In works exposed continually to public view, variety ought to be studied. It is a rule, accordingly, in sculpture, to contrast the different limbs of a statue, in order to give it all the variety possible. Though the cone in a single view be more beautiful than the pyramid, yet a pyramidal steeple, on account of its variety, is justly preferred. For the same reason, the oval is preferred before the circle; and painters, in copying buildings or any regular work, give an air of variety by representing the subject in an angular view; we are pleased with the variety, without losing sight of the regularity. In a landscape representing animals, those especially of the same kind, contrast ought to prevail: to draw one sleeping, another awake; one sitting, another in motion; one moving toward the spectator, another from him, is the life of such a performance.

In every sort of writing intended for amusement, variety is necessary in proportion to the length of the work. Want of variety is sensibly felt in Davila's history of the Civil Wars of

France: the events are indeed important and various; but the reader languishes by a tiresome monotony of character, every person engaged being figured a consummate politician, governed by interest only. It is hard to say, whether Ovid disgusts more by too great variety, or too great uniformity. His histories are all of the same kind, concluding invariably with the transformation of one being into another: and so far he is tiresome by excess in uniformity. He is not less fatiguing by excess in variety, hurrying his reader incessantly from story to story. Ariosto is still more fatiguing than Ovid, by exceeding the just bounds of variety. Not satisfied, like Ovid, with a succession in his stories, he distracts the reader, by jumbling together a multitude of them without any connection. Nor is the Orlando Furioso less tiresome by its uniformity than the Metamorphoses, though in a different manner. After a story is brought to a crisis, the reader, intent on the catastrophe, is suddenly snatched away to a new story, which makes no impression as long as the mind is occupied with the former. This tantalizing method, from which the author never once swerves during the course of a long work, besides its uniformity, hath another bad effect; it prevents that sympathy which is raised by an interesting event when the reader meets with no interruption.

It may surprise some readers to find variety
treated

treated as only contributing to make a train of perceptions pleasant, when it is commonly held to be a necessary ingredient in beauty of whatever kind; according to the definition, "That beauty consists in uniformity amid variety." But this definition, however applicable to one or other species, is far from being just with respect to beauty in general. Variety contributes no share to the beauty of a moral action, nor of a mathematical theorem; and numberless are the beautiful objects of sight that have little or no variety in them: a globe, the most uniform of all figures, is of all the most beautiful; and a square, though more beautiful than a trapezium, hath less variety in its constituent parts. The foregoing definition, which at best is but obscurely expressed, is only applicable to a number of objects in a group or in succession; among which, indeed, a due mixture of uniformity and variety is always agreeable; provided the particular objects separately considered, be in any degree beautiful; for uniformity amid variety among ugly objects affords no pleasure. This circumstance is totally omitted in the definition; and indeed to have mentioned it, would at the very first glance have shown the definition to be imperfect: for to define beauty as arising from beautiful objects blended together in a due proportion of uniformity and variety, would be too gross to pass current;.

rent; as nothing can be more gross, than to employ in a definition the very term that is to be explained.

● LORD KAMES.

UNIFORMITY OF CONDUCT.

UNIFORMITY in the behaviour of men would suppose in them a continuity of attention which they are incapable of; differing from one another only more or less. The man of absolute uniformity has no existence; so that no perfection, either with regard to vice or virtue, is to be found on the earth.

HELVETIUS.

UNION OF BODY-POLITIC.

UNION, in a body-politic, is a very equivocal term: true union is such a harmony, as makes all the particular parts, as opposite as they may seem to us, concur to the general welfare of the society, in the same manner as discords in music contribute to the general melody of sound. Union may prevail in a state full of seeming commotions; or, in other words, there may be an harmony from whence results prosperity, which alone is true peace, and may be considered in the same view as the various parts of this universe,
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which are eternally connected by the action of some and the re-action of others.

In a despotic state, indeed, which is every government where the supreme power is immoderately exerted, a real division is perpetually kindled. The peasant, the soldier, the merchant, the magistrate, and the grandee, have no other conjunction than what arises from the ability of the one to oppress the other without resistance; and if at any time an union happens to be introduced, citizens are not then united, but like dead bodies laid in the grave contiguous to each other.

MONTESQUIEU.

THE UNITY OF THE DEITY.

IF men were led into the apprehension of invisible intelligent power by a contemplation of the works of nature, they could never possibly entertain any conception but of one single Being, who bestowed existence and order on this vast machine, and adjusted all its parts, according to one regular plan and connected system. For though, to persons of a certain turn of mind, it may not appear altogether absurd, that several independent beings, endowed with superior wisdom, might conspire in the contrivance and execution of one regular plan; yet is this a merely arbitrary supposition, which, even if allowed possible, must be
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confessed neither to be supported by probability nor necessity. All things in the universe are evidently of a piece. Every thing is adjusted to every thing. One design prevails throughout the whole. And this uniformity leads the mind to acknowledge one Author; because the conception of different authors, without any distinction of attributes or operations, serves only to give perplexity to the imagination, without bestowing any satisfaction on the understanding. The statue of Laocoon, as we learn from Pliny, was the work of three artists: but it is certain, that were we not told so, we should never have concluded, that a groupe of figures, cut from one stone, and united in one plan, was not the work and contrivance of one statuary. To ascribe any single effect to the combination of several causes, is not surely a natural and obvious supposition.

HUME.

MODERN UNIVERSITIES.

THE institutions for the education of youth may furnish a revenue sufficient for defraying their own expence. The fee or honorary which the scholar pays to the master naturally constitutes a revenue of this kind.

Even where the reward of the master does not arise altogether from this natural revenue, it still

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is not necessary that it should be derived from that general revenue of the society, of which the collection and application is, in most countries, assigned to the executive power. Through the greater part of Europe, accordingly, the endowment of schools and colleges makes either no charge upon that general revenue, or but a very small one. It every where arises chiefly from some local or provincial revenue, from the rent of some landed estate, or from the interest of some sum of money allotted and put under the management of trustees for this particular purpose; sometimes by the sovereign himself, and sometimes by some private donor.

Have those public endowments contributed in general to promote the end of their institution? Have they contributed to encourage the diligence, and to improve the abilities of the teachers? Have they directed the course of education towards objects more useful, both to the individual and to the public, than those to which it would naturally have gone of its own accord? It should not seem very difficult to give at least a probable answer to each of those questions.

In every profession, the exertion of the greater part of those who exercise it, is always in proportion to the necessity they are under of making that exertion. This necessity is greatest with those to whom the emoluments of their profession are the only

only source from which they expect their fortune, or even their ordinary revenue and subsistence. In order to acquire this fortune, or even to get this subsistence, they must, in the course of a year, execute a certain quantity of work of a known value; and, where the competition is free, the rivalry of competitors, who are all endeavouring to juggle one another out of employment, obliges every man to endeavour to execute his work with a certain degree of exactness. The greatness of the objects which are to be acquired by success in some particular professions may, no doubt, sometimes animate the exertion of a few men of extraordinary spirit and ambition. Great objects, however, are evidently not necessary in order to occasion the greatest exertions. Rivalship and emulation render excellency, even in mean professions, an object of ambition, and frequently occasion the very greatest exertions. Great objects, on the contrary, alone and unsupported by the necessity of application, have seldom been sufficient to occasion any considerable exertion. In England, success in the profession of the law leads to some very great objects of ambition; and yet how few men, born to easy fortunes, have ever in this country been eminent in that profession!

The endowments of schools and colleges have necessarily diminished more or less the necessity

of application in the teachers. Their subsistence, so far as it arises from their salaries, is evidently derived from a fund altogether independent of their success and reputation in their particular professions.

In some universities the salary makes but a part, and frequently but a small part, of the emoluments of the teacher; of which the greater part arises from the honoraries or fees of his pupils. The necessity of application, though always more or less diminished, is not in this case entirely taken away. Reputation in his profession is still of some importance to him; and he still has some dependency upon the affection, gratitude, and favourable report of those who have attended upon his instructions; and these favourable sentiments he is likely to gain in no way so well as by deserving them; that is, by the abilities and diligence with which he discharges every part of his duty.

In other universities, the teacher is prohibited from receiving any honorary or fee from his pupils, and his salary constitutes the whole of the revenue which he derives from his office. His interest is, in this case, set as directly in opposition to his duty as it is possible to set it. It is the interest of every man to live as much at his ease as he can; and if his emoluments are to be precisely the same, whether he does, or does not perform some very laborious duty, it is certainly his

interest, at least as interest is vulgarly understood, either to neglect it altogether, or, if he is subject to some authority which will not suffer him to do this, to perform it in as careless and slovenly a manner as that authority will permit. If he is naturally active and a lover of labour, it is his interest to employ that activity in any way from which he can derive some advantage, rather than in the performance of his duty, from which he can derive none.

If the authority to which he is subject resides in the body corporate, the college, or university, of which he himself is a member, and in which the greater part of the other members are, like himself, persons who either are, or ought to be teachers; they are likely to make a common cause, to be all very indulgent to one another, and every man to consent that his neighbour may neglect his duty, provided he himself is allowed to neglect his own. In the university of Oxford, the greater part of the public professors have, for these many years, given up altogether even the pretence of teaching.

If the authority to which he is subject resides, not so much in the body corporate of which he is a member, as in some other extraneous persons, in the bishop of the diocese for example, in the governor of the province, or perhaps in some minister of state, it is not indeed in this case very likely

likely that he will be suffered to neglect his duty altogether. All that such superiors, however, can force him to do, is to attend upon his pupils a certain number of hours, that is, to give a certain number of lectures in the week or in the year. What those lectures shall be, must still depend upon the diligence of the teacher; and that diligence is likely to be proportioned to the motives which he has for exerting it. An extraneous jurisdiction of this kind, besides, is liable to be exercised both ignorantly and capriciously. In its nature it is arbitrary and discretionary; and the persons who exercise it, neither attending upon the lectures of the teacher themselves, nor perhaps understanding the sciences which it is his business to teach, are seldom capable of exercising it with judgment. From the insolence of office, too, they are frequently indifferent how they exercise it, and are very apt to censure or deprive him of his office wantonly, and without any just cause. The person subject to such jurisdiction is necessarily degraded by it; and, instead of being one of the most respectable, is rendered one of the meanest and most contemptible persons in the society. It is by powerful protection only that he can effectually guard himself against the bad usage to which he is at all times exposed; and this protection he is most likely to gain, not by ability or diligence in his profession, but by obse-

quiousness to the will of his superiors, and by being ready, at all times, to sacrifice to that will the rights, the interest, and the honour of the body corporate of which he is a member. Whoever has attended for any considerable time to the administration of a French university, or any of the Catholic universities in general, must have had occasion to remark the effects which naturally result from an arbitrary and extraneous jurisdiction of this kind.

Whatever forces a certain number of students to any college or university, independent of the merit or reputation of the teachers, tends more or less to diminish the necessity of that merit or reputation.

The privileges of graduates in arts, in law, physic, and divinity, when they can be obtained only by residing a certain number of years in certain universities, necessarily force a certain number of students to such universities, independent of the merit or reputation of the teachers. The privileges of graduates are a sort of statutes of apprenticeship, which have contributed to the improvement of education, just as the other statutes of apprenticeship have to that of arts and manufactures.

The charitable foundations of scholarships, exhibitions, bursaries, &c. necessarily attach a certain number of students to certain colleges, independent altogether of the merit of those particu-

lar

lar colleges. Were the students upon such charitable foundations left free to choose what college they liked best, such liberty might perhaps contribute to excite some emulation among different colleges. A regulation, on the contrary, which prohibited even the independent members of every particular college from leaving it, and going to any other, without leave first asked and obtained of that which they meant to abandon, would tend very much to extinguish that emulation.

If in each college the tutor or teacher, who was to instruct each student in all arts and sciences, should not be voluntarily chosen by the student, but appointed by the head of the college; and if, in case of neglect, inability, or bad usage, the student should not be allowed to change him for another, without leave first asked and obtained; such a regulation would not only tend very much to extinguish all emulation among the different tutors of the same college, but to diminish very much in all of them the necessity of diligence and of attention to their respective pupils. Such teachers, though very well paid by their students, might be as much disposed to neglect them, as those who are not paid by them at all, or who have no other recompence but their salary.

If the teacher happens to be a man of sense, it must be an unpleasant thing to him to be con-

scious, while he is lecturing his students, that he is either speaking or reading nonsense, or what is very little better than nonsense. It must, too, be unpleasant to him to observe that the greater part of his students desert his lectures; or perhaps attend upon them with plain enough marks of neglect, contempt, and derision. If he is obliged, therefore, to give a certain number of lectures, these motives alone, without any other interest, might dispose him to take some pains to give tolerably good ones. Several different expedients, however, may be fallen upon which will effectually blunt the edge of all those incitements to diligence. The teacher, instead of explaining to his pupils himself, the science in which he proposes to instruct them, may read some book upon it; and, if this book is written in a foreign and dead language, by interpreting it to them into their own; or, what would give him still less trouble, by making them interpret it to him, and by now and then making an occasional remark upon it, he may flatter himself that he is giving a lecture. The slightest degree of knowledge and application will enable him to do this without exposing himself to contempt or derision, or saying any thing that is really foolish, absurd, or ridiculous. The discipline of the college, at the same time, may enable him to force all his pupils to the most regular attendance upon this sham lecture, and to maintain the most decent
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and respectful behaviour during the whole time of the performance.

The discipline of colleges and universities is in general (the Protestant universities in the continent of Europe deserve an exception) contrived, not for the benefit of the students, but for the interest, or, more properly speaking, for the ease of the masters. Its object is, in all cases, to maintain the authority of the master; and, whether he neglects or performs his duty, to oblige the students in all cases to behave to him as if he performed it with the greatest diligence and ability. It seems to presume perfect wisdom and virtue in the one order, and the greatest weakness and folly in the other. Where the masters, however, really perform their duty, there are no examples, I believe, that the greater part of the students ever neglect theirs. No discipline is ever requisite to force attendance upon lectures which are really worth the attending; as is well known wherever any such lectures are given. Force and restraint may, no doubt, be in some degree requisite in order to oblige children, or very young boys, to attend to those parts of education which it is thought necessary for them to acquire during that early period of life; but after twelve or thirteen years of age, provided the master does his duty, force or restraint can scarce ever be necessary to carry on any part of education. Such is the generosity of the greater part of young men,
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that, so far from being disposed to neglect or despise the instructions of their masters, provided he shews some serious intention of being of use to them, they are generally inclined to pardon a great deal of incorrectness in the performance of his duty, and sometimes even to conceal from the public a good deal of gross negligence.

Those parts of education, it is to be observed, for the teaching of which there are no public institutions, are generally the best taught. When a young man goes to a fencing or a dancing school, he does not, indeed, always learn to fence or to dance very well; but he seldom fails of learning to fence or to dance. The good effects of the riding school are not commonly so evident. The expence of a riding school is so great, that in most places it is a public institution. The three most essential parts of literary education, to read, write, and account, it still continues to be more common to acquire in private than in public schools; and it very seldom happens that any body fails of acquiring them to the degree in which it is necessary to acquire them.

In England the public schools are much less corrupted than the universities. In the schools the youth are taught, or at least may be taught, Greek and Latin, that is, every thing which the masters pretend to teach, or which it is expected they should teach. In the universities the youth
neither

neither are taught, nor always can find any proper means of being taught, the sciences which it is the business of those incorporated bodies to teach. The reward of the schoolmaster in most cases depends principally, in some cases almost entirely, upon the fees or honoraries of his scholars. Schools have no exclusive privileges. In order to obtain the honours of graduation, it is not necessary that a person should bring a certificate of his having studied a certain number of years at a public school. If upon examination he appears to understand what is taught there, no questions are asked about the place where he learnt it.

The parts of education which are commonly taught in universities, it may, perhaps, be said are not very well taught. But had it not been for those institutions, they would not have been commonly taught at all; and both the individual and the public would have suffered a good deal from the want of those important parts of education.

The present universities of Europe were originally, the greater part of them, ecclesiastical corporations; instituted for the education of churchmen. They were founded by the authority of the pope, and were so entirely under his immediate protection, that their members, whether masters or students, had all of them what was then called the benefit of clergy, that is, were exempted

empted from the civil jurisdiction of the countries in which their respective universities were situated, and were amenable only to the ecclesiastical tribunals. What was taught in the greater part of those universities was, suitable to the end of their institution, either theology, or something that was merely preparatory to theology.

When Christianity was first established by law, a corrupted Latin had become the common language of all the western parts of Europe. The service of the church accordingly, and the translation of the Bible which was read in churches, were both in that corrupted Latin, that is, in the common language of the country. After the irruption of the barbarous nations who overturned the Roman empire, Latin gradually ceased to be the language of any part of Europe. But the reverence of the people naturally preserves the established forms and ceremonies of religion, long after the circumstances which first introduced and rendered them reasonable are no more. Though Latin, therefore, was no longer understood any where by the great body of the people, the whole service of the church still continued to be performed in that language. Two different languages were thus established in Europe, in the same manner as in ancient Egypt; a language of the priests, and a language of the people; a sacred and a profane, a learned and an unlearned language.

language. But it was necessary that the priests should understand something of that sacred and learned language in which they were to officiate; and the study of the Latin language therefore made, from the beginning, an essential part of university education.

It was not so with that either of the Greek, or of the Hebrew language. The infallible decrees of the church had pronounced the Latin translation of the Bible, commonly called the Latin Vulgate, to have been equally dictated by divine inspiration, and therefore of equal authority with the Greek and Hebrew originals. The knowledge of those two languages, therefore, not being indispensably requisite to a churchman, the study of them did not for a long time make a necessary part of the common course of university education. There are some Spanish universities, I am assured, in which the study of the Greek language has never yet made any part of that course. The first Reformers found the Greek text of the New Testament, and even the Hebrew text of the Old, more favourable to their opinions than the Vulgate translation; which, as might naturally be supposed, had been gradually accommodated to support the doctrines of the Catholic church. They set themselves, therefore, to expose the many errors of that translation, which the Roman Catholic clergy were thus put under the necessity

cessity of defending or explaining. But this could not well be done without some knowledge of the original languages; of which the study was therefore gradually introduced into the greater part of universities, both of those which embraced, and of those which rejected, the doctrines of the Reformation. The Greek language was connected with every part of that classical learning, which, though at first principally cultivated by Catholics and Italians, happened to come into fashion much about the same time that the doctrines of the Reformation were set on foot. In the greater part of universities, therefore, that language was taught previous to the study of philosophy, and as soon as the student had made some progress in the Latin. The Hebrew language having no connection with classical learning, and, except the Holy Scriptures, being the language of not a single book in any esteem, the study of it did not commonly commence till after that of philosophy, and when the student had entered upon the study of theology.

Originally the first rudiments both of the Greek and Latin languages were taught in universities, and in some universities they still continue to be so. In others it is expected that the student should have previously acquired at least the rudiments of one or both of those languages, of which the study

continues to make every where a very considerable part of university education.

A. SMITH.

FALSE IDEAS OF UTILITY.

A principal source of errors and injustice are false ideas of utility. For example; that legislature has false false ideas of utility, who considers particular more than general conveniences; who rather command the sentiments of mankind than excite them, and dares say to reason, "Be thou a slave;" who would sacrifice a thousand real advantages to the fear of an imaginary or trifling inconvenience; who would deprive men of the use of fire for fear of their being burnt, and of water for fear of their being drowned; and who knows of no means of preventing evil but by destroying it.—It is the false idea of utility, that would give to a multitude of sensible beings that symmetry and order, which inanimate matter is alone capable of receiving; that would neglect the present, which are the only motives that act with force and constancy on the multitude, for the more distant, whose impressions are weak and transitory, unless increased by that strength of imagination, so very uncommon among mankind. Finally, that is a false idea of utility, which, sacrific

ficing things to names, separates the public good from that of individuals.

BECCARIA.

THE PRINCIPLE OF UTILITY.

BY the principle of utility, is meant that principle which approves or disapproves of every action whatsoever, according to the tendency which it appears to have to augment or diminish the happiness of the party whose interest is in question: or, what is the same thing in other words, to promote or to oppose that happiness. I say of every action whatsoever; and therefore not only of every action of a private individual, but of every measure of government.

By utility is meant that property in any object, whereby it tends to produce benefit, advantage, pleasure, good, or happiness (all this in the present case comes to the same thing); or (what comes again to the same thing) to prevent the happening of mischief, pain, evil, or unhappiness to the party whose interest is considered: if that party be the community in general, then the happiness of the community; if a particular individual, then the happiness of that individual.

The interest of the community is one of most general expressions that occur in the phraseology of morals: no wonder that the meaning
of

of it is often lost. When it has a meaning, it is this: The community is a fictitious body, composed of the individual persons who are considered as constituting as it were its members. The interest of the community then is, what? the sum of the interest of the several members who compose it.

It is in vain to talk of the interest of the community, without understanding what is the interest of the individual. A thing is said to promote the interest, or to be for the interest of an individual, when it tends to add to the sum total of his pleasures; or, what comes to the same thing, to diminish the sum total of his pains.

An action then may be said to be conformable to the principle of utility, or, for shortness sake, to utility (meaning with respect to the community at large), when the tendency it has to augment the happiness of the community is greater than any it has to diminish it.

A measure of government (which is but a particular kind of action, performed by a particular person or persons) may be said to be conformable to or dictated by the principle of utility, when in like manner the tendency which it has to augment the happiness of the community is greater than any which it has to diminish it.

Of an action that is conformable to the principle of utility, one may always say, either that it

is one that ought to be done, or at least that it is not one that ought not to be done. One may say also, that it is right it should be done; at least, that it is not wrong it should be done: that it is a right action; at least, that it is not a wrong action. When thus interpreted, the words *ought*, and *right*, and *wrong*, and others of that stamp, have a meaning: when otherwise, they have none.

When a man attempts to combat the principle of utility, it is with reasons drawn, without his being aware of it, from that very principle itself. His arguments, if they prove any thing, prove, not that the principle is *wrong*, but that according to the applications he supposes to be made of it, it is *misapplied*. Is it possible for a man to move the earth? Yes; but he must first find out another earth to stand upon.

To disprove the propriety of it by arguments is impossible; but, from the causes that have been mentioned, or from some confused or partial view of it, a man may happen to be disposed not to relish it. Where this is the case, if he thinks the settling of his opinions on such a subject worth the trouble, let him take the following steps, and at length perhaps he may come to reconcile himself to it.

1. Let him settle with himself, whether he would wish to discard this principle altogether;

if

if so, let him consider what it is that all his reasonings (in matters of politics especially) can amount to?

2. If he would, let him settle with himself, whether he would judge and act without any principle, or whether there is any other he would judge and act by?

3. If there be, let him examine and satisfy himself, whether the principle he thinks he has found is really any separate intelligible principle; or whether it be not a mere principle in words, a kind of phrase, which at bottom expresses neither more nor less than the mere avowment of his own unfounded sentiments; that is, what in another person he might be apt to call caprice?

4. If he is inclined to think that his own approbation or disapprobation, annexed to the idea of an act, without any regard to its consequences, is a sufficient foundation for him to judge and act upon; let him ask himself, whether his sentiment is to be a standard of right and wrong with respect to every other man, or whether every man's sentiment has the same privilege of being a standard to itself?

5. In the first case, let him ask himself, whether his principle is not despotical, and hostile to all the rest of human race?

6. In the second case, whether it is not anarchical; and whether at this rate there are not as

many different standards of right and wrong as there are men? And whether, even to the same man, the same thing which is right to day may not (without the least change in its nature) be wrong to-morrow? and whether the same thing is not right and wrong in the same place at the same time? and in either case, whether all argument is not at an end? and whether, when two men have said, "I like this," and "I do not like it," they can (upon such a principle) have any thing more to say?

7. If he should have said to himself, No: for that the sentiment which he proposes as a standard must be grounded on reflection; let him say on what particulars the reflection is to turn? If on particulars having relation to the utility of the act, then let him say, whether this is not deserting his own principle, and borrowing assistance from that very one in opposition to which he sets it up: Or, if not on those particulars, on what other particulars?

8. If he should be for compounding the matter, and adopting his own principle in part, and the principle of utility in part, let him say how far he will adopt it?

9. When he has settled with himself where he will stop, then let him ask himself, how he justifies to himself the adopting it so far? and why he will not adopt it any further?

10. Ad-

10. Admitting any other principle than the principle of utility to be a right principle, a principle that it is right for a man to pursue; admitting (what is not true) that the word *right* can have a meaning without reference to utility; let him say, whether there is any such thing as a *motive* that a man can have to pursue the dictates of it? If there is, let him say what that motive is, and how it is to be distinguished from those which enforce the dictates of utility? If not, then, lastly, let him say, what it is this other principle can be good for?

J. BENTHAM.

10. Admitting any other principle than the
 principle of utility to be a right principle, we
 suppose that it is right for a man to pursue; al-
 though (what is not true) that this way right
 can have a meaning with reference to utility;
 let him say, whether there is any such thing as a
 motive right, a man can have to pursue the object
 of it. Is there is, let him say what that motive is,
 and how it is to be distinguished from those which
 are not right. ~~Let him say what that motive is,~~
 let him say, what is this other principle on
 which he is to proceed?

W A R

FAMINE, the plague, and war, are the three
 most famous ingredients in this lower world.
 Under famine may be classed all the noxious
 foods which want obliges us to have recourse
 to; thus shortening our life, whilst we hope to
 support it.

In the plague are included all contagious dis-
 tempers: and these are not few in number.
 These two gifts we hold from Providence: But
 war, in which all those gifts are concentrated,
 we owe to the fancy of three or four hundred
 persons scattered over the surface of this globe,
 under the name of *princes* and *ministers*; and
 on this account it may be that, in several dedi-
 cations,

cations, they are called *the living images of the Deity*.

The most hardened flatterer will allow, that war is ever attended with plague and famine, especially if he has seen the military hospitals in Germany, or passed through some villages where some notable feat of arms has been performed.

It is unquestionably a very notable art to ravage countries, destroy dwellings, and, *communibus annis*, out of a hundred thousand men to cut off forty thousand. This invention was originally cultivated by nations assembled for their common good : for instance, the diet of the Greeks sent word to the diet of Phrygia and its neighbours, that they were putting to sea in a thousand fishing-boats, in order to do their best to cut them off root and branch.

The Roman people, in a general assembly, resolved, that it was their interest to go and fight the Veientes, or the Volscians, before harvest ; and some years after, all the Romans being angry with all the Carthaginians, fought a long time both by sea and land. It is otherwise in our time.

A genealogist sets forth to a prince, that he is descended in a direct line from a count, whose kindred, three or four hundred years ago, had made a family compact with a house, the very memory of which is extinguished. That house
had

had some distant claim to a province, the last proprietor of which died of an apoplexy. The prince and his council instantly resolve, that this province belongs to him by divine right. The province, which is some hundred leagues from him, protests that it does not so much as know him; that it is not disposed to be governed by him; that before prescribing laws to them, their consent, at least, was necessary. These allegations do not so much as reach the prince's ears; it is insisted on, that his right is incontestable. He instantly picks up a multitude of men, who have nothing to do nor nothing to lose; clothes them with coarse blue, white, green, or scarlet cloth, a few *sous* to the ell; puts on them hats bound with coarse white worsted; makes them turn to the right and left; and thus marches away with them to glory.

Other princes, on this armament, take part in it to the best of their ability, and soon cover a small extent of country with more hireling murderers than Gengis-Kan, Tamerlane, and Bajazet had at their heels.

People, at no small distance, on hearing that fighting is going forward; and that if they would make one, there are five or six *sous* a-day for them, immediately divide into two bands, like reapers, and go and sell their services to the first bidder.

These multitudes furiously butcher one another,

ther, not only without having any concern in the quarrel, but without so much as knowing what it is about.

Sometimes five or six powers are engaged, three against three, two against four, sometimes even one against five, all equally detesting one another; and, friends and foes by turns, agreeing only in one thing, to do all the mischief possible.

An odd circumstance in this infernal enterprise is, that every chief of these ruffians has his colours consecrated, and solemnly prays to God before he goes to destroy his neighbour. If the slain in a battle do not exceed two or three thousand, the fortunate commander does not think it worth thanking God for; but if, besides killing ten or twelve thousand men, he has been so far favoured by Heaven as totally to destroy some remarkable place, then a verbose hymn is sung in four parts, composed in a language unknown to all the combatants, and besides stuffed with barbarisms. The same song does for marriages and births as for massacres; which is scarce pardonable, especially in a nation of all others the most noted for new songs.

All countries pay a certain number of orators to celebrate these sanguinary actions; some in a long black coat, and over it a short-docked cloak; others in a gown, with a kind of shirt over it; some, again, over their shirts have two pieces of
motley

motley-coloured stuff hanging down. They are all very long-winded in their harangues; and to illustrate a battle fought in Wetteravia, bring up what passed thousands of years ago in Palestine.

At other times, these gentry declaim against vice; they prove by syllogisms and antitheses, that ladies, for slightly heightening the hue of their cheeks with a little carmine, will assuredly be the eternal object of eternal vengeance; that Polyucte and Athalia are the devil's works; that he whose table on a day of abstinence is loaded with fish to the amount of two hundred crowns, is infallibly saved; and that a poor man, for eating two penny-worth of mutton, goes to the devil for ever and ever.

Among five or six thousand such declamations there may be, and that is the most, three or four written by a Gaul named *Massillon*, which a gentleman may bear to read: but in not one of all these discourses has the orator the spirit to animadvert on war, that scourge and crime which includes all others. These groveling speakers are continually prating against love, mankind's only solace, and the only way of repairing it: not a word do they say of the detestable endeavours of the mighty for its destruction.

Bourdaloue! a very bad sermon hast thou made against impurity; but not one, either bad or good, on those various kinds of murders; on those robberies,

beries; on those violences, that universal rage by which the world is laid waste ! Put together all the vices of all ages and places, and never will they come up to the mischiefs and enormities of only one campaign.

Ye bungling soul-physicians ! to bellow for an hour and more against a few flea-bites, and not say a word about that horrid distemper which tears us to pieces.—Burn your books, ye moralising philosophers ! Whilst the humour of a few shall make it an act of loyalty to butcher thousands of our fellow-creatures; the part of mankind dedicated to heroism will be the most execrable and destructive monsters in all nature. Of what avail is humanity, benevolence, modesty, temperance, mildness, discretion and piety ! when half a pound of lead, discharged at the distance of six hundred paces, shatters my body ? when I expire at the age of twenty under pains unspeakable, and amidst thousands in the same miserable condition ? when my eyes, at their last opening, see my native town all in a blaze ; and the last sounds I hear, are the shrieks and groans of women and children expiring among the ruins ? and all for the pretended interest of a man who is a stranger to us !

The worst is, that war appears to be an unavoidable scourge : for, if we observe it, the god Mars was worshipped in all nations; and among

the Jews, *Sabbath* signifies *the god of armies*; but in Homer, Minerva calls Mars a furious hat-brained infernal deity.

VOLTAIRE.

CALAMITIES OF W A R.

WAR impedes the course of every salutary plan, exhausts the sources of prosperity, and diverts the attention of governors from the happiness of nations. It even suspends sometimes every idea of justice and humanity. In a word, instead of gentle and benevolent feelings, it substitutes hostility and hatred, the necessity of oppression, and the rage of desolation.

The first idea that occurs to me, when I reflect on the origin of most wars, is, that those great combinations of politics which have so often kindled the torch of discord, and occasioned so many ravages, have very seldom merited all the admiration that has been so lavishly bestowed upon them. At least I might venture to say, that when a state is arrived at an illustrious height of power, it is owing to the want of a comprehension sufficiently extensive, and to an incompetent knowledge of its resources, that continual anxieties are entertained, and the duration of the public tranquillity made to depend on such a variety of uncertain speculations. I might even venture

to observe, moreover, that in such nations it is a real misfortune for the people, when, by a kind of imitative spirit, their government has been accustomed to contemplate the strength of states in those exterior connections only, the texture and combination of which form what is called *political science*. Then the most subtle ideas concerning the balance of power become the predominant principles, and incessantly engross the attention. Hence arise those frequent wars of competition, of which the first renders a second more probable: for in proportion as a state has been weakened by a war, it is so much the more apt to become jealous again; because the sensations of jealousy are excited only by comparison; and in a course of years, it is sometimes one power, and sometimes another, that attracts political observation. Thus, the history of all ages exhibits nations incessantly endeavouring to reduce each other to the same state of humiliation to which they had themselves been reduced by their own political mistakes. On the contrary, were every state to be sparing of its strength, to cultivate a proper knowledge of its resources, and to render them respectable by a wise administration, it would arrive, without effort, to that height of superiority it is so anxious to attain.

I must likewise observe, that this kind of superiority is the only one of which the relative

consequences, if I may so express myself, are universal. The triumphs of war exalt you no doubt above the nation you may conquer; but as these triumphs commonly require long efforts and great sacrifices, the exhausted state resulting thence necessarily alters the proportion which existed between your strength and that of the great powers who were not engaged in your quarrel, and whose prosperity increased under the protection of that peace which they enjoyed.

In a word, it cannot be denied, that the height of greatness to which a nation may arrive by the wisdom of its administration, is the most commanding, and the most conducive to secure the respect of other nations. These are much more jealous of the most insignificant acquisitions which are proposed to be gained by war or negotiation, than of that augmentation of greatness of which order is the foundation. And this sentiment is natural: for that prosperity, which originates in the wise conduct of a sovereign, renders his virtues also more conspicuous, exhibiting them at the same time as a security against any abuse which he might make of his augmented power.

Of late years it has been, for the sake of commerce in particular, that such scenes of bloodshed have been recorded. Commerce, that loose and indeterminate idea, adds new lustre to political speculations; and the public opinion, excited
by

by a word that indicates an universal interest, is often misled itself in its decisions. I would fain ask those who, from such motives, are ever ready to be the advocates for war; Do you know the balance of the commerce of your country? Have you studied its elements? Have you sufficiently examined, whether the trade in which you desire to participate, will increase the national opulence? Do you well discern the causes and consequences of that opulence? Have you balanced the advantages you expect from war, against the injuries which commerce will sustain from the augmented rate of interest, occasioned by the multiplication of the government loans, and the dearness of labour, which is a necessary consequence of the increase of taxes? Are you certain, that while you endeavour to obtain a new branch of commerce by the sword, you may not lose another, either through that deference which you will be obliged to pay to your ancient allies, or those concessions that your new ones may require? In a word, are you sufficiently acquainted with the whole extent of your present prosperity; and have you formed an estimate of all the sacrifices which the very end of your ambition may deserve? Nothing is more simple than the word *commerce* in its vulgar acceptance; nothing more complicated, when it is applied to the universality of exchanges, to the importance of some, the inutility

of others, the disadvantage of many; to political views; in short, to labour, taxes, and all the unexpected combinations which war and great events produce. Deliberate and deep reflection is necessary then, before we determine to kindle the flames of war for a commercial advantage. And it ought never to be forgotten, that in time of peace, a diminution of certain duties, a bounty on some exportations, a privilege obtained from some foreign nations, and many other advantages resulting from a wise administration, are often of far greater value than the object which is proposed to be gained by fleets and armies.

Nations, in their savage state, were actuated by blind and unruly passions; and these passions have been softened in some measure by the effect of civilization. But the multiplicity and confusion of different interests, which the ideas of money, commerce, national riches, and the balance of power have introduced, have become other causes of hostility and jealousy; and as the science of government has not improved in proportion to the contradictions it had to reconcile, and the difficulties it had to overcome, mankind still enjoy but imperfectly the change in their condition.

I would here submit to reflection, a consideration with which I have ever been forcibly struck. Most governments appear satisfied, if, at the conclusion

clusion of a bloody and expensive war, they have made an honourable peace. Undoubtedly such a termination may satisfy a state, which having been unjustly attacked, was reduced to the necessity of repelling force by force. But that nation which might have avoided the enmity of other powers by more circumspect proceedings, and that also which has undertaken a war from mere political speculations, cannot be ignorant, that an estimation of the advantages which they derive from the treaty of peace is not the only calculation worthy of their attention. Each is also to consider what would have been its situation at the period when the treaty was concluded, if war had not interrupted the course of its prosperity.

Such comparisons might have been often useful to all the potentates in Europe; and Great Britain, in particular, might have received the most important instructions from them: But as it is not in my power to enter into such an extensive detail, I shall confine myself to such reflections as are applicable to France.

Let us suppose a war in which this kingdom should be obliged to alienate from fifty to sixty millions of its annual revenue (from 2,187,500l. to 2,625,000l. sterling) in order to pay the interest of the loans, which the preparations for war, the expences of each campaign, and the liquidation of debts had rendered necessary; and let us
next

next take a cursory view of the different uses to which government might have applied such a revenue, not only for the advancement of the national happiness, but for the augmentation of the military force.

The distribution which I am going to make of this revenue, does not indicate my absolute opinion on the subject. But, in a calculation of this kind, I would anticipate objections, by showing how the different wishes that are formed in a monarchy, with respect either to happiness or power, might have been perfectly accomplished.

In the first place I find, that with eighteen millions (787,500*l.* sterling) of that annual revenue, the regimental companies might have been completed to their full complement, and the army augmented by 50,000 infantry, and ten or twelve thousand horse.

I find, in the next place, that two millions of that revenue (87,500*l.* sterling), which in time of peace would pay the interest of a loan of forty millions (1,750,000*l.* sterling), would have added to our navy thirty men of war, and a proportionable number of frigates; and this augmentation might have been maintained by four millions yearly (175,000*l.* sterling).—Thus we see twenty-four millions (1,050,000*l.* sterling) of that revenue devoted solely to the military service.

Let us now apply the surplus to the various
parts

parts of administration, and let us consider the result.

With eighteen millions (787,500*l.* sterling) yearly, the price of salt might have been rendered uniform throughout the kingdom, by reducing it one-third in the provinces of little gabels (an excise on salt), and two-thirds in those of the great; and not increasing the charges of the privileged provinces.

With from four to five millions (from 175,000*l.* to 218,750*l.* sterling) annually, the interior parts of the kingdom might have been freed from all custom-house duties, without raising those levied on the exports and imports of the kingdom, or carrying to account the improvements I suggested when treating on this subject.

With 2,500,000*l.* livres (109,375*l.* sterling) serving to pay the interest of successive loans, to the amount of fifty millions (2,187,500*l.* sterling), all the necessary canals might have been executed that are still wanting in the kingdom.

With one million more per annum (43,750*l.* sterling) government might be enabled to bestow sufficient encouragement on all the establishments of industry that can advance the prosperity of France.

With 1,500,000*l.* livres (65,625*l.* sterling) the sums annually destined to give employment to the poor might be doubled; and, while great advantages

vantages would thus accrue to the inhabitants of the country, the neighbouring communications might be multiplied.

With the same sum the prisons throughout the kingdom might, in a few years, be improved, and all the charitable institutions brought to perfection.

And with two millions annually (87,500*l.* sterling), the clearing of the waste lands might proceed with incredible vigour.

These distributions amount to thirty one millions (1,356,250*l.* sterling), which joined to twenty-four millions (1,050,000*l.* sterling) for military expences, make together the annual revenue of fifty-five millions employed as above (2,406,250*l.* sterling); a sum equal to that which I have supposed to be alienated for the disbursements of the war.

The distributions which I have thus suggested, it is evident, may be modified in many different ways: but it is sufficient to perceive the immense advantages which this simple statement exhibits; whether with respect to the strength and prosperity of the kingdom, or for the assistance and solace of the indigent class of people.

This is not all; for if we estimate the diminution of commerce which results from a war of five or six years duration, it will be found, that

the kingdom is deprived of a considerable increase of riches.

In time, war, and the loans which it occasions, create a very sensible rise in the rate of interest. On the contrary, peace, under a wise administration, would lower it annually, were it only in consequence of the increase of specie, and of the influence of the stated reimbursements. This successive reduction of interest is likewise a source of inestimable advantages to commerce, agriculture, and the finances.

Let these effects be now compared with the advantages which a fortunate war, (and all wars are not so), would give to a kingdom arrived at that height of prosperity by which France is now distinguished; and let this comparison be made, not in a desultory manner, but by the aid of reflection and science; and it will be found, for the most part, that ten seeds have been sown, in order to gather the fruit of one.

Undoubtedly, with so many powerful means, a government may expect, with great probability, to humble its rivals and extend its dominions. But to employ its resources for the happiness of its subjects; to command respect without the assistance and dangers of an ever restless policy; this is a conduct, which alone can correspond to the greatness of its situation; and which displays at once a knowledge of its ascendancy and of the
ad-

van-
tages to be derived from it. By such a con-
duct, a government imitates those beneficent ri-
vers, whose rapid current cannot be impeded, but
which, in their majestic course, encourage navi-
gation, facilitate commerce, and fertilise the
country without injury or devastation.

It is not war, but a wise and pacific admini-
stration, that can procure all the advantages of
which France may be yet in want.

The quantity of specie in the kingdom is im-
mense; but the want of public confidence very
often occasions the greatest part of it to be hoard-
ed up.

The population of the kingdom is immense;
but the excess and nature of the taxes impoverish
and dishearten the inhabitants of the country. In
a state of misery the human species is weakened;
and the number of children, who die before their
strength can be matured, is no longer in a natu-
ral proportion.

The revenue of the sovereign is immense: but
the public debt consumes two-fifths of it; and
nothing can diminish this burden but the fruits
of a prudent œconomy, and the lowering of the
rate of interest.

The contributions of the nation, in particular,
are immense; but it is only by the strengthening
of public credit, that government can succeed in

finding sufficient resources in extraordinary emergencies.

Finally, the balance of commerce in favour of the kingdom is an immense source of riches; but war interrupts the current. Hence results an important reflection; namely, that the nation which derives the most considerable advantages from peace, makes also the greatest sacrifices whenever it renounces that state of quiet and prosperity.

NECKER.

RELIGIOUS W A R S ARE A LESS FATAL SCOURGE THAN THAT OF THE INQUISITION; WITH A SUCCINCT HISTORY OF THIS TRIBUNAL.

A militia of 500,000 monks and friars, fighting with spiritual arms under the standard of Rome, could not hinder one half of Europe from shaking off the yoke of that court: And the Inquisition has had no other effect, than to deprive the pope of some more provinces, witness the United Netherlands; or to commit unhappy wretches, without answering any purpose, to the flames.

You may remember, that in the wars against the Albigenes, and about the year 1200, Pope Innocent III. established this tribunal, which takes cognisance of human thoughts; and that in contempt of the bishops, the natural judges in

matters of doctrine, it was entrusted to the care of the Dominicans and Cordeliers.

Those first inquisitors had the power of summoning and excommunicating heretics; of granting indulgencies to every prince that would exterminate them when condemned; of reconciling penitents to the church; of taxing their sins, and receiving sums of money by way of surety for their repentance.

It was a very droll instance of the absurd contradictions to which human policy is oftentimes reduced, that the most inveterate enemy of the see of Rome happened to be the most strenuous defender of this tribunal.

Frederick II. accused by the pope, one time, of being a Mahometan, another time of Atheism, imagined he should wipe off this reproach by taking the inquisitors under his protection. He even went so far as to publish four edicts at Pavia in 1244, whereby he laid an injunction on the magistrates, to commit those to the flames whom the inquisitors should condemn as obstinate heretics, and to imprison those for life whom this tribunal should declare repentant.

Notwithstanding this political step, Frederick II. was persecuted as much as before; and the popes afterwards turned the arms he had put into their hands against the rights and privileges of the empire.

Pope

Pope Alexander III. established the inquisition in France in 1255 under St Lewis. The guardian of the Cordeliers at Paris, and the provincial of the Dominicans, were grand inquisitors. By the bull of Pope Alexander, they were to consult, but not to be dependent on the bishops. The giving of this strange jurisdiction to men, who by vows had renounced the world, set both clergy and laity against them. An inquisitor of the order of Cordeliers assisted at the trial of the knights Templar; but the public were soon so dissatisfied, that those friars had nothing more left than an empty title.

In Italy the popes had more credit; because, though disobeyed at Rome, from whence they had been long absent, they were still at the head of the faction of the Guelphs against the Gibelines. They made use of this inquisition against the partisans of the empire: For in 1302, Pope John XXII. made the monkish inquisitors proceed against Matthew Visconti, a Milanese nobleman, whose sole crime was his attachment to the emperor Lewis of Bavaria. The vassal's fidelity to his paramount was declared heresy; the house of Este, as also that of Malatesta, were treated in the same manner, and for the same reason; and if the sentence was not put in execution, it was because at that time it was easier for the pope to find inquisitors than armies.

The more this tribunal gained ground, the more strenuously it was claimed by the bishops, who saw themselves stripped of a privilege which seemed to belong to their order. The popes at length joined them in commission with the monkish inquisitors, who exercised a full authority almost in every state of Italy; the bishops being properly no more than their assessors.

Venice had received the Inquisition towards the end of the thirteenth century in 1289; every where else it was dependent on the pope; but in the Venetian dominions it became subject to the senate. The wisest precaution they took, was, that the fines and confiscations should not belong to the inquisitors. They thought to moderate the zeal of those men by removing the temptation of enriching themselves: But as the passion of pride and ambition is more preponderating with mankind than avarice, the restless spirit of the Inquisition obliged the senate, a long time after, that is, in the sixteenth century, to enact a law, that the Inquisition should never proceed without the assistance of three senators. In consequence of this regulation, and several others of the like good policy, the authority of this tribunal was in a manner abolished at Venice by being eluded.

One would have imagined that the Inquisition should have been introduced with the greatest ease,

case, and settled in the firmest manner, in the kingdom of Naples; yet it never reached this part of Italy. The sovereigns of Naples and Sicily thinking themselves intitled, in consequence of papal concessions, to the enjoyment of ecclesiastic jurisdiction, the Roman pontiff and the king were constantly disputing who should nominate the inquisitors; which was the reason of their not being appointed; and the people, for the first time, benefited by the quarrel of their masters. Yet there were fewer heretics in Naples and Sicily than in other countries. The religious tranquillity of those kingdoms, shows very plainly, that the Inquisition was not so much the bulwark of religion, as a scourge designed for the disturbance of the human species.

At length, it was established in Sicily, after it had been received in Spain by Ferdinand and Isabella in 1478: But in Sicily, rather more than in Castile, it was a prerogative of the crown, and not a Roman tribunal; for in Sicily the king is pope.

The Inquisition had long before gained admittance into Arragon; it was there in a languid state as well as in France, without jurisdiction or order, and almost entirely forgot.

But it was not till after the conquest of Granada, that it exerted throughout the kingdom of Spain such vigour and severity as had been never

observed in the ordinary courts of justice. The Spaniards must at that time have had something in their nature more severe and unrelenting than other nations. This appears by the barbarities which they so wantonly exercised in the new world; and especially by the cruelties which they introduced into a jurisdiction, wherein the Italians, its inventors, behave with some lenity. The court of Rome had erected those tribunals out of policy; but they became more odious by the barbarity of the Spanish inquisitors.

After Mahomet II. had subdued Constantinople, both he and his successors permitted the conquered Greeks to enjoy their religion in peace: and when the Arabians were masters in Spain, they never compelled the Christian natives of that country to embrace the Koran. But after the taking of Granada, Cardinal Ximenes, whether induced by religious zeal, or by the ambition of extending his primacy, would have all the Moors turn Christians. This was an enterprise diametrically contrary to the treaty by which the Moors had submitted; and it required some time to bring it to bear. But Ximenes would fain convert the Moors as quick as he had taken Granada. They were compelled to hear sermons; they were persecuted: they rose up in arms; were quelled, and forced to submit to baptism. Ximenes obliged 50,000 Moors to receive this
sign

sign of a religion which they did not believe to be true.

The Jews were included in the treaty with the kings of Granada, but did not meet with more indulgence than the Moors. They were very numerous in Spain, where they followed the business of brokerage, as in all other countries. This profession, far from giving any umbrage, is founded on peace. There are above 28,000 Jews tolerated by the pope in Italy; and there are above two hundred and fourscore synagogues in Poland. The city of Amsterdam alone contains 15,000 Jews; though surely it can trade without them. The Jews did not seem to be more dangerous in Spain; and the taxes that might be laid on them, would have been sure resources to the government. It was therefore difficult to account by the maxims of sound policy for the persecution they underwent.

The Inquisition proceeded against the Jews and the Mussulmen. We have already observed, what a number of Mahometan and Jewish families chose rather to retire from Spain, than to be subject to the cruelty of this tribunal; which deprived Ferdinand and Isabella of a multitude of subjects. Surely there was least danger from those people, since they preferred to be fugitives rather than rebels. Those who staid behind pretended to be Christians. But the grand inquisitor

istor Torquemada made Queen Isabella look upon all those sham Christians, as people that deserved to lose their lives and estates.

This Torquemada was a Dominican, and afterwards cardinal: he settled the form of proceeding in the Spanish court of Inquisition; a form contrary to all human laws, and which subsists, notwithstanding, to this very day. In fourteen years he brought near fourscore thousand men to their trial, and caused six thousand to be burnt with all the pomp and ceremony usual on the greatest solemnities. The accounts given us of people who sacrificed human victims to the Deity, fall greatly short of the executions of the Inquisition. Against those bloody rites the Spaniards did not conceive sufficient horror, because they were sacrificing their inveterate enemies, and the Jews. But they soon became victims themselves: For when Lutheranism began to spread, the few Spaniards suspected of embracing that doctrine were made a sacrifice. The form of proceeding was an infallible way to destroy whomsoever the inquisitors pleased. The prisoners are not confronted with their accusers; and there is no informer ever so base but they listen to: A public criminal, an infamous person, a child, a prostitute, are good evidence; even a son may inform against his father, a wife against her husband. In short, the prisoner is obliged to accuse himself; to

guess,

gues, and to confess the crime he is supposed to be guilty of, and of which he is frequently ignorant. This strange manner of proceeding struck a terror into the whole kingdom of Spain : a general jealousy and suspicion took possession of all ranks of people ; friendship and sociability were at an end : brothers were afraid of brothers ; fathers, of their children. Hence silence is become the characteristic of a nation, endowed with all the vivacity natural to a warm and fruitful climate. The most artful endeavoured to be bailiffs to the Inquisition, under the name of *familiars* ; choosing rather this servile office, than to be exposed to such cruelties.

To this tribunal we must likewise attribute that ignorance of sound philosophy, in which Spain lies buried ; while Germany, England, France, and even Italy, have discovered such a multitude of truths, and enlarged the sphere of knowledge. Never is human nature so debased, as when ignorance is armed with power.

But these melancholy effects of the Inquisition are a trifle, in comparison to those public sacrifices called *Auto da Fe*, or acts of faith, and to the shocking barbarities that precede them.

A priest in a white surplice, or a monk who has vowed meekness and humility, causes his fellow-creatures to be put to the torture in a dismal dungeon. A stage is erected in the public market-place,

place, where the condemned prisoners are conducted to the stake, attended with a train of monks and religious confraternities. They sing psalms, say mass, and butcher mankind. Were a native of Asia to come to Madrid upon the day of an execution of this sort, it would be impossible for him to tell whether it was a rejoicing, a religious feast, a sacrifice, or a massacre; and yet it is all this together. The kings, whose presence alone in other cases is the harbinger of mercy, assist at this spectacle uncovered, lower seated than the inquisitors, and behold their subjects expiring in the flames. The Spaniards reproached Montezuma with immolating his captives to his gods; what would he have said, had he beheld an *Auto da Fe*?

These executions are more rare at present. But reason, whose rays with difficulty pervade the darkness of fanaticism, has not as yet been able to abolish them.

The Inquisition was not introduced into Portugal till towards the year 1557, before this country fell under the Spanish yoke. At first it met with all the opposition its very name ought naturally to inspire: But at length it forced its way; and now it is under the same form of government at Lisbon as at Madrid. The grand inquisitor is nominated by the king, and confirmed by the pope. The particular courts of this office, to
which

which they give the name of *holy*, are subordinate, both in Spain and Portugal, to the tribunal of the capital. In both these kingdoms the Inquisition is distinguished by the same severity and by the same zeal in extending its power.

In Spain, after the decease of Charles V. they presumed to seize on that emperor's father-confessor Constantine Pontius: The poor man died in a dungeon; and his effigy was burnt after his death at an *Auto da Fe*.

In Portugal, John of Braganza, having rescued his country from the Spanish yoke, would have been glad to deliver it from the Inquisition; but he could do no more than deprive the inquisitors of the confiscated estates. After his decease they declared him excommunicated; and the queen his widow was obliged to desire they would absolve the dead corpse. By this absolution, equally ridiculous and disgraceful, he was acknowledged to have been guilty.

When the Spaniards made settlements in America, they carried the Inquisition along with them. And the Portuguese introduced it into the East Indies, after it had been authorised at Lisbon.

Every body has heard of the Inquisition of Goa. This jurisdiction in other countries is contrary to the law of nature, but at Goa it is repugnant to good policy. The Portuguese sail to the East Indies merely for the sake of trade. Now trade and the Inquisition are incompatible. Were
it

it to be established at London or at Amsterdam, those cities would neither be so populous nor so opulent. We find, that when Philip II. would fain introduce it into the Netherlands, the interruption of commerce was one of the principal causes of the revolution of that country. France and Germany have been happily preserved from this scourge. They have indeed experienced religious wars: but wars must sometimes have an end; while the Inquisition, when once established, becomes eternal.

It is not at all surprising, that so detestable a tribunal should have been charged with excesses of cruelty and insolence which it never committed. We find in several writers, that the above mentioned Constantine Pontius, confessor to Charles V. had been accused before the Holy Office with having dictated the emperor's will, wherein there was not a sufficient number of pious legacies; that both the confessor and the will were condemned to be burnt; and at length that Philip II. could obtain no more, but that the sentence should not be executed in regard to the will. This whole story is evidently false. Constantine Pontius had not been confessor for some time to Charles V. when he was imprisoned; and that prince's will was respected by Philip II. who had too great abilities and power to suffer the commencement of his reign, and his father's glory, to be thus dishonoured.

We read likewise in several books written against the Inquisition, that the King of Spain, Philip III. assisting at an *Auto da Fe*, and seeing several of his subjects, Jews, Mahometans, and heretics, or suspected heretics, in the flames, he cried out; "Poor wretches, indeed, to suffer death because they could not change their opinion!" It is very probable that a king might have entertained such sentiments, and that those words might have dropped from him. Only it is cruel he did not spare those whom he pitied. But they add, that these words having been carried to the grand inquisitor, he charged the king with them, and had the impudence to demand a reparation of the honour of the holy office: that the king was so mean as to submit; and that this reparation consisted in his being let blood, which the grand inquisitor ordered to be burnt by the common hangman. Philip III. was a shallow prince, but not so excessively weak. A story of this nature is not credible of any prince; it is related only in anonymous pieces in the Lives of the Popes, and in those false memoirs printed in Holland under so many spurious titles. Besides, it must be very weak policy to calumniate the Inquisition, and to try to wound her with the arms of falsehood and imposture.

This tribunal, designed for the extirpation of

heresy, is the very thing that keeps the Protestants at the greatest distance from the Church of Rome. They view it as an object of horror; they would rather die than submit to it; so that the sulphureous fumes of the holy office are the standard against which they will ever unite.

VOLTAIRE.

WICKED AND WICKEDNESS.

WE are perpetually told that human nature is

essentially perverse; that man is born a child of

the devil. Now nothing can be more imprudent;

for, my friend, in preaching to me that all the

world is born in wickedness, thou informest me

that thou art born so, and that it behoves me to

beware of thee as I would of a fox or crocodile.

O! not at all, sayest thou, I am regenerated; I am

no unbeliever or heretic; I may be trusted: so

then, the remainder of mankind being either he-

retics, or what thou callest *infidels*, will be a mere

herd of monsters; and whenever thou art speak-

ing to a Lutheran or a Turk, thou shouldest con-

clude that they are for robbing and murdering

thee, for they are the devil's spawn; one is not

regenerated, and the other is degenerated. Much

more rational and much more handsome would it

be to say to men, " You are all born good; con-

sider how dreadful it would be to defile the pu-

rity

"rity of your being." Mankind should be dealt with as individuals. If a prebendary leads a scandalous life, a friend says to him, Is it possible that you can thus disgrace the dignity of a prebendary? A counsellor or judge is reminded that he has the honour of being counsellor to the king, and that it is his duty to be an example of virtue. The encouragement to a soldier is, Remember you belong to the regiment of Champagne. And every individual should be told, Remember your dignity as a man.

Say or do what you will, this must at length be the case; for what can mean this saying, so common among all nations, Reflect within thyself? Now, were you born a child of the devil; were your origin criminal; were your blood formed of an infernal liquor; to bid you reflect within yourself would import, Consult your diabolical nature, and follow its suggestions; cheat, rob, murder; it is your father's law.

Man is not born wicked; he becomes so, as he falls sick. Should some physicians come and tell him, you are born sick; it is certain that these physicians, whatever they might say or do, will not cure him if his disease be inherent in his nature; and these reasoners are themselves very sick.

Bring together all the children of the universe, you will see nothing in them but innocence, gen-

tleness, and fear. Were they born wicked, spiteful, and cruel, some signs of it would come from them, as little snakes strive to bite, and little tygers to tear. But Nature having been as sparing of offensive weapons to man as to pigeons and rabbits, it cannot have given them an instinct to mischief and destruction.

So man is not born wicked! How comes it then that so many are infected with the pestilence of wickedness? It is because they who bear rule over them having caught the distemper, communicate it to others; as a woman, having the distemper which Christopher Columbus is said to have brought from America, has spread the venom all over Europe. By the first ambitious man was the world corrupted.

You will say, that this first monster only fecundated that germ of pride, rapine, fraud, and cruelty, which is in all men. I own that, in general, the greater part of our brethren easily contract these qualities: but has every body the putrid fever, the stone, and gravel, because every body is liable to those distempers?

There are whole nations which are not wicked; the Philadelphians, the Banyans, have never shed human blood. The Chinese, the people of Tonquin, Lao, Siam, and even of Japan, have lived in the most profound tranquillity for these hundred years past. In the space of ten years
scarce

scarce any of those enormities at which human nature stands astonished, is heard of in the cities of Rome, Venice, Paris, London, and Amsterdam; cities where yet cupidity, the mother of all crimes, is flagrant.

If men were essentially wicked, and all born under the sway of a being as malignant as wretched, who, in revenge for his punishment, inspired them with all his rage, we should every morning hear of husbands being murdered by their wives, and fathers by their children, just as fowls are found killed by a pole-cat, who came in the night and sucked their blood.

If we suppose there are ten hundred millions of men upon the earth, it is a great many; and this makes about five hundred millions of women, who sew and spin, feed their little ones, keep the house or hut clean, and backbite their neighbours a little. I do not see any great harm these poor simpletons do on earth. Of this number of inhabitants on the globe, there are at least two hundred millions of children, who certainly neither kill nor plunder, and about as many who, through age and sickness, are not capable of those crimes. Thus, there remains, at most, but a hundred millions, whom youth and vigour qualify for the commission of crimes. Of these hundred millions, we may say, that ninety are continually taken up with prodigious labour, in forcing the earth to

furnish them with food and raiment: now these have scarce time to perpetrate outrages.

In the remaining ten millions will be included idlers and jocund companions, who love peace and festivity; the men of talents, who are taken up with their several professions; magistrates and priests, whom it manifestly behoves to lead an irreproachable life, at least in appearance: so that the real wicked men are reduced to some few politicians, either secular or regular, who will always be for disturbing the world; and some thousands of vagrants who hire their services to those politicians. Now never is a million of these wild beasts employed at once, and among these I reckon highwaymen: so that at most, and in the most tempestuous times, there is but one man of a thousand who may be called wicked; and he is not so always.

Thus is wickedness on earth infinitely less than is talked of and believed. To be sure, there is still too much misfortune, distress, and horrible crimes; but the pleasure of complaining and magnifying is such, that at the least scratch you cry out, the earth is deluged with blood. If you have been cheated, then the world is full of perjury. An atrabilarious mind, on having been wronged, sees the universe covered with damned souls: as a young rake, seated at supper with his doxy af-

ter the opera, does not dream that there are any distressed objects.

VOLTAIRE.

THE CHARACTER OF AN AMIABLE WIFE.

THE happy marriage is, where two persons meet, and voluntarily make choice of each other, without regarding or neglecting the circumstance of fortune or beauty. These may still love in spite of adversity or sickness: the former we may in some measure defend ourselves from; the other is the common lot of humanity. When esteem and love unite hearts, ostentation and pomp of living will not be coveted; solitude and mediocrity, with the person beloved, yield pleasures beyond what can be derived from show and splendor. Personal perfections are the only solid foundation for conjugal happiness: the gifts of fortune are adventitious, and may be acquired; but intrinsic worth is permanent and incommunicable.

When a woman marries, she does in a great measure trust every thing that is dear to her, to the honour of the person she is united to; and therefore it is surely the height of imprudence to risk so much, without having the strongest reasons to believe he will not abuse the confidence she places in him, nor neglect or desert her for another.

In

In order to conduct yourself in that relation; so as to secure a permanent satisfaction, should you be blest with a husband who really loves you, and is in every respect worthy of you, it may be of use to attend to the following directions:

Marriage has by many been made subject of ridicule, and considered as a state of confinement, and to be the *grave of love*. However these opinions may be frequently found, I am confident they are not generally so.

Ever consider it as a matter of the first importance, to preserve your husband's affections. To him you are to look for support and protection; and to secure his smiles and approbation, should be your highest ambition, and the grand object of all your actions.

Let it be your constant endeavour to make home agreeable to him; meet him with the kindest looks, and all that winning softness you are capable of; and let him see that you are always pleased and happy in his company. Then will he return to you from the employments and engagements of public life with ever-new delight. Pay a constant attention to family concerns, and the conducting of his household affairs, and let him see that you have always a regard to oeconomy. Should any little difference in opinion arise at any time between you and your husband, never contest the point with him, unless you do it with the greatest

greatest good humour; and if you cannot bring him over to your sentiments, make a merit of at least appearing to submit to his.

Do not be indifferent in what dress you appear when at home; but accustom yourself to such cloaths and ornaments as you know will best please him, and make you look most agreeable in his eyes.

Always behave to his friends, relations, and visitors, with cheerfulness and good temper, and study to please and make them happy whilst at your home. He will consider this as a mark of attention to himself: he will afterwards hear your disposition and behaviour commended, and feel the greatest satisfaction and delight in attending to the praises bestowed on you, from a consciousness of your deserts, and the reflection how near and dear you are to him.

This advice and caution to direct your conduct when you become mistress of a family, and fill that respectable station in life, being followed, you will be universally regarded as a pattern and example to others of your sex.

Sir Harry Wildair's character of his wife.—

"She is affable to all men, free with no man, and only kind to me; often cheerful, sometimes gay, and always pleased; but when I am angry, then sorry, not sullen. The park, play-house, and cards, she frequents in compliance with custom; but

but her diversions of inclination are at home: she is more cautious of a remarkable woman than of a noted wit; well knowing that the infection of her own sex is more catching than the temptation of ours: to all this, she is beautiful to a wonder, scorns all devices that engage a gallant, and uses all arts to please her husband." * *

WISDOM AND VIRTUE, RELATIVE TERMS.

THAT there is a natural difference between merit and demerit, virtue and vice, wisdom and folly, no reasonable man will deny. Yet it is evident, that in affixing the term which denotes either our approbation or blame, we are commonly more influenced by comparison than by any fixed unalterable standard in the nature of things.

The honourable appellations of wise and virtuous, are not annexed to any particular degree of those qualities of *wisdom* and *virtue*; but arise altogether from the comparison we make between one man and another. When we find a man, who arrives at such a pitch of wisdom as is very uncommon, we pronounce him a wise man. So that to say, there are few wise men in the world, is really to say nothing; since it is only by their scarcity that they merit that appellation. Were the lowest of our species as wise as Tully or Lord Bacon, we should still have reason to say, that there

there are few wise men. For in that case we should exalt our notions of wisdom, and should not pay a singular honour to any one who was not singularly distinguished by his talents. In like manner, it is observed by thoughtless people, that there are few women possessed of beauty in comparison of those who want it; not considering that we bestow the epithet of *beautiful* only on such as possess a degree of beauty that is common to them with a few. The same degree of beauty in a woman is called deformity, which is treated as real beauty in one of the male sex.

HUME.

THE DIFFERENCE OF WIT AND JUDGMENT.

How much the imperfection of accurately discriminating ideas one from another lies, either in the dulness or faults of the organs of sense, or want of acuteness, exercise, or attention in the understanding, or hastiness and precipitancy natural to some tempers, I will not here examine. It suffices to take notice, that this is one of the operations that the mind may reflect on, and observe in itself. It is of that consequence to its other knowledge, that so far as this faculty is in itself dull, or not rightly made use of for the distinguishing one thing from another, so far our notions are confused, and our reason and judgment

ment disturbed or misled. If in having our ideas in the memory ready at hand, consists quickness of parts; in this of having them unconfused, and being able nicely to distinguish one thing from another, where there is but the least difference, consists in a great measure the exactness of judgment and clearness of reason which are to be observed in one man above another. And hence, perhaps, may be given some reason of that common observation, That men who have a great deal of wit and prompt memories, have not always the clearest judgment or deepest reason. For *wit* lies most in the assemblage of ideas, and putting those together with quickness and variety wherein can be found any resemblance or congruity, thereby to make up pleasant pictures and agreeable visions in the fancy. *Judgment*, on the contrary, lies quite on the other side, in separating carefully, one from another, ideas wherein can be found the least difference, thereby to avoid being misled by similitude, and by affinity to take one thing for another. || This is a way of proceeding quite contrary to metaphor and allusion; wherein, for the most part, lies that entertainment and pleasantry of wit which strikes so lively on the fancy, and therefore so acceptable to all people; because its beauty appears at first sight, and there is required no labour of thought to examine what truth or reason there is in it. The mind, without

out looking any further, rests satisfied with the agreeableness of the picture, and the gaiety of the fancy; and it is a kind of affront to go about to examine it by the severe rules of truth and good reason; whereby it appears, that it consists in something that is not perfectly conformable to them.

LOCKE.

CREDIBILITY OF WITNESSES.

Every man of common sense, that is, every one whose ideas have some connection with each other, and whose sensations are conformable to those of other men, may be a witness; but the credibility of his evidence will be in proportion as he is interested in declaring or concealing the truth.

Hence it appears, how frivolous is the reasoning of those who reject the testimony of women on account of their weakness; how puerile it is, not to admit the evidence of those who are under sentence of death because they are dead in law; and how irrational, to exclude persons branded with infamy; for in all these cases they ought to be credited, when they have no interest in giving false testimony. The credibility of a witness, then, should only diminish in proportion to the hatred, friendship, or connections, subsisting between him and the delinquent. One witness is not suf-

ficient; for whilst the accused denies what the other affirms, truth remains suspended, and the right that every one has to be believed innocent, turns the balance in his favour. The credibility of a witness is the less as the atrociousness of the crime is greater, from the improbability of its having been committed. In cases of wanton cruelty, the presumption is always against the accuser; for no man is cruel without some interest, without some motive of fear or hatred. There are no spontaneous or superfluous sentiments in the heart of man; they are all the result of impressions on the senses. The credibility of a witness may also be diminished, by his being a member of a private society, whose customs and principles of conduct are either not known, or are different from those of the public. Such a man has not only his own passions, but those of the society of which he is a member. The credibility of a witness is null when the question relates to the words of a criminal; for the tone of voice, the gesture, all that precedes, accompanies, and follows, the different ideas which men annex to the same words, may so alter and modify a man's discourse, that it is almost impossible to repeat them precisely in the manner in which they were spoken. Violent and uncommon actions, such as real crimes, leave a trace in the multitude of circumstances that attend them, and in their effects; but words remain

main only in the memory of the hearers, who are commonly negligent and prejudiced. It is infinitely easier, then, to found an accusation on the words, than on the actions of a man; for in these, the number of circumstances urged against the accused, afford him variety of means of justification.

BECCARIA.

WOMEN.

IN monarchies, women are subject to very little restraint; because, as the distinction of ranks calls them to court, thither they repair in order to assume that spirit of liberty, which is the only one there tolerated. The aspiring courtier avails himself of their charms and passions, in order to advance his fortune: and as their weakness admits not of pride, but of vanity, luxury constantly attends them.

In despotic governments women do not introduce, but are themselves an object of luxury. They must be in a state of the most rigorous servitude. Every one follows the spirit of the government, and adopts in his own family the customs he sees elsewhere established. As the laws are very severe, and executed on the spot, they are afraid lest the liberty of women should expose them to dangers. Their quarrels, indiscretions,

repugnancies, jealousies, piques, and that art, in fine, which little souls have of interesting great ones, would be attended there with fatal consequences.

Besides, as princes in those countries make a port of human nature, they allow themselves a multitude of women; and a thousand considerations oblige them to keep them in close confinement.

In republics, women are free by the laws, and constrained by manners; luxury is banished from thence, and with it corruption and vice.

In the cities of Greece, where they were not under the restraint of a religion which declares, that even amongst men a purity of manners is a part of virtue; where a blind passion triumphed with a boundless insolence, and love appeared only in a shape which we dare not mention; while marriage was considered as nothing more than simple friendship; such was the virtue, simplicity, and chastity of women in those cities, that in this respect hardly any people were ever known to have had a better and wiser polity.

MONTESQUIEU.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

THE prodigious number of wives possessed by those who live in rich and voluptuous nations, is

a consequence of the law of polygamy. Their separation from men, and their close confinement, naturally follow from the greatness of this number. Domestic order renders this necessary: thus an insolvent debtor seeks to conceal himself from the pursuit of his creditors. There are climates where the impulses of nature have such strength that morality has almost none. If a man be left with a woman, the temptation and the fall will be the same thing; the attack certain, the resistance none. In these countries, instead of precepts, they have recourse to bolts and bars.

One of the Chinese classic authors considers the man as a prodigy of virtue, who, finding a woman alone in a distant apartment, can forbear violating her.

MONTESQUIEU.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

IN a republic, the condition of citizens is limited, equal, mild, and agreeable: every thing partakes of the benefit of public liberty. An empire over the woman cannot amongst them be so well exerted; and, where the climate demands this empire, it is most agreeable to the government of a single person. This is one of the reasons why it has always been difficult to establish a popular government in the east.

On the contrary, the slavery of women is perfectly conformable to the genius of a despotic government, which delights in treating all with severity. Thus at all times have we seen in Asia domestic slavery and despotic government walk hand in hand with an equal pace.

In a government which requires, above all things, that a particular regard be paid to its tranquillity, and where the extreme subordination forms that tranquillity, it is absolutely necessary to shut up the women; for their intrigues would prove fatal to their husbands. A government, which has not time to examine into the conduct of its subjects, views them with a suspicious eye, only because they appear, and suffer themselves to be known.

Let us only suppose that the levity of mind, the indiscretions, the tastes and disgusts of our women, attended by their passions of a higher and a lower kind, with all their active fire, and in that full liberty with which they appear amongst us, were conveyed into an eastern government, where would be the father of a family who could enjoy a moment's repose? The men would be every where suspected, every where enemies; the state would be overturned, and the kingdom overflowed with rivers of blood.

MONTESQUIEU.

ON

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

IN the case of a multiplicity of wives, the more a family ceases to be united, the more ought the laws to re-unite its detached parts in a common centre; and the greater the diversity of interests, the more necessary it is for the laws to bring them back to a common interest.

This is more particularly done by confinement. The women should not only be separated from the men by the walls of the house, but they ought also to be separated in the same inclosure, in such a manner that each may have a distinct household in the same family. From hence each derives all that relates to the practice of morality, modesty, chastity, reserve, silence, peace, dependence, respect, love, and, in short, a general direction of her thoughts to that which in its own nature is a thing of the greatest importance, a single and entire attachment to her family.

Women have naturally so many duties to fulfil, duties which are peculiarly theirs, that they cannot be enough excluded from every thing capable of inspiring other ideas, from every thing that goes by the name of *amusements*, and from every thing which we call *business*.

We find the manners more pure in the several parts of the east, in proportion as the confinement

ment of women is more strictly observed. In great kingdoms there are necessarily great lords. The greater their wealth, the more enlarged is their ability of keeping their wives in an exact confinement, and of preventing them from entering again into society. Hence it proceeds, that in the empires of Turkey, Persia, of the Mogul, China, and Japan, the manners of their wives are admirable.

But the case is not the same with India, where a multitude of islands, and the situation of the land, have divided the country into an infinite number of little states, which, from causes that we have not here room to mention, are rendered despotic.

There are none there but the wretches who pillage, and the wretches who are pillaged. Their grandees have very moderate fortunes, and those whom they call rich have only a bare subsistence. The confinement of their women cannot therefore be very strict; nor can they make use of any great precautions to keep them within due bounds: hence it proceeds that the corruption of their manners is so great as scarcely to be conceived.

We may there see to what an extreme the vices of a climate, indulged in full liberty, will carry licentiousness. It is there that nature has a strength, and modesty a weakness, that exceeds all comprehension. At Patan the wanton desires
of

of the women are so outrageous, that the men are obliged to make use of a certain apparel to shelter them from their designs. In these countries, the two sexes lose even those laws which properly belong to each.

MONTESQUIEU.

WORSHIP.

IN the reign of Arcadius, Logomacos, a theologue of Constantinople, went into Scythia, and stopped at the foot of mount Caucasus in the fertile plains of Zephirim, bordering on Colchis. The good old man Dondindac was, after a light repast, kneeling in his large hall, between his vast sheepfold and his ample barn, with his wife, his five sons and five daughters, some of his kindred and his domestics, all chanting the praises of the Bounteous Giver of all good things. Ho! what art thou about, idolater? said Logomacos to him. I am no idolater, said Dondindac. An idolater thou must be, said Logomacos to him, as being a Scythian, or at least no Greek. Well, and what wast thou gabbling in thy Scythian jargon? All languages are alike in God's ear, answered the Scythian: we were singing his praises. Very extraordinary indeed, replied the theologue, a Scythian family worshipping God without any previous instruction from us! He soon entered into a
con-

conversation with Dondindac; for the theologue had a smattering of the Scythian, and the other understood a little Greek. This conversation is lately come to light in a manuscript kept in the imperial library at Constantinople.

Log. I will see whether thou knowest thy catechism: why prayest thou to God?

Don. Because it is just and proper to worship the Supreme Being; as of him we hold all we have.

Log. Pretty well for a barbarian; and what askest thou of him?

Don. I thank God for the good things he gives me, and even for the crosses with which he tries me: but as for asking of him any thing, that is what I never presume to do; he knows what we stand in need of better than ourselves: besides, I should be afraid to ask for sunshine, when rain would better suit my neighbour.

Log. Ah! I apprehended we should soon have some nonsense or other from him. Let me take a retrospect of things; who told thee there is a God?

Don. All Nature?

Log. That is nothing; what idea hast thou of God?

Don. That he is my Creator, my master; who will reward me if I do well, and punish me if I do amiss.

Log. That is but trivial and low; let us come to

to the essential. Is God infinite *secundum quid*, or in his essence?

Don. I do not understand you.

Log. Stupid dolt! is God in a place, or out of all place, or is he every where?

Don. I know nothing of that; it may be just as you please.

Log. Ignorant wretch! Well; can he make what has been not to have been, or that a stick shall not have two ends? Is futurity to him as future, or as present? How does he do to bring nothing into existence, and to annihilate existence?

Don. I never bestow a thought on these things.

Log. What an oaf is this! Well, I must let myself down, I must suit myself to the meanness of his intellects. Tell me, friend, believest thou that matter can be eternal?

Don. What is it to me whether it exists from eternity or not? I did not exist from eternity. God is always my master and instructor. He has given me the knowledge of justice, and it is my duty to act accordingly. I do not desire to be a philosopher, let me be a man.

Log. What a plague it is to have to do with such thick-headed creatures! I must proceed gradually with him. What is God?

Don. My sovereign, my judge, my father.

Log. That is not what I ask you; what is his nature?

Don.

Don. To be powerful and good.

Log. But whether is he corporeal or spiritual?

Don. How should I know?

Log. What? not know what a spirit is!

Don. Not I in the least; and what should I be the better for such knowledge? will it mend my morals, make me a better husband, a better father, a better master, a better member of society?

Log. A man must be absolutely taught what a spirit is, since it is,—it is,—it is——Well, we will let that alone till another time.

Don. I fancy, instead of being able to tell me what it is, you will rather tell me what it is not. But after so much questioning, may I take the freedom to ask you a question? I was formerly in one of your temples, and why do you paint God with a long beard?

Log. That is a very abstruse question; the solution of which would be above your comprehension, without some preliminary instructions.

Don. Before you enter on your instructions, I must tell you a circumstance which I hope never to forget. I had just built a summer-house at the end of my garden; and one day sitting in it, I heard a Mole and a Chafer descanting on it: A superb edifice it certainly is, said the Mole, and of very great parts must that mole have been who built it. A mole forsooth! quoth the Chafer; the architect of that pretty building could be no other

other than some chafer of an extraordinary genius. This colloquy put me on a resolution never to dispute.

VOLTAIRE.

CORRUPTIONS OF THE CHRISTIAN WORSHIP.

IN the long period of twelve hundred years, which elapsed between the reign of Constantine and the Reformation of Luther, the worship of saints and relics corrupted the pure and perfect simplicity of the Christian model; and some symptoms of degeneracy may be observed even in the first generations which adopted and cherished this pernicious innovation.

I. The satisfactory experience, that the relics of saints were more valuable than gold or precious stones, stimulated the clergy to multiply the treasures of the church. Without much regard for truth or probability, they invented names for skeletons, and actions for names. The fame of the Apostles, and of the holy men who had imitated their virtues, was darkened by religious fiction. To the invincible band of genuine and primitive martyrs, they added myriads of imaginary heroes, who had never existed except in the fancy of crafty or credulous legendaries; and there is rea-

son to suspect, that Tours might not be the only diocese in which the bones of a malefactor were adored instead of those of a saint. A superstitious practice, which tended to increase the temptations of fraud and credulity, insensibly extinguished the light of history and of reason in the Christian world.

II. But the progress of superstition would have been much less rapid and victorious, if the faith of the people had not been assisted by the seasonable aid of visions and miracles, to ascertain the authenticity and virtue of the most suspicious relics. In the reign of the younger Theodosius, Lucian, a presbyter of Jerusalem, and the ecclesiastical minister of the village of Caphargamala, about 20 miles from the city, related a very singular dream, which, to remove his doubts, had been repeated on three successive Saturdays. A venerable figure stood before him, in the silence of the night, with a long beard, a white robe, and a gold rod; announced himself by the name of Gamaliel, and revealed to the astonished presbyter, that his own corpse, with the bodies of his son Abibas, his friend Nicodemus, and the illustrious Stephen the first martyr of the Christian faith, were secretly buried in the adjacent field. He added, with some impatience, that it was time to release himself, and his companions, from their obscure prison; that their appearance would be
salutary

salutary to a distressed world; and that they had made choice of Lucian to inform the bishop of Jerusalem of their situation, and their wishes. The doubts and difficulties which still retarded this important discovery, were successively removed by new visions: and the ground was opened by the bishop in the presence of an innumerable multitude. The coffins of Gamaliel, of his son, and of his friend, were found in regular order; but when the fourth coffin, which contained the remains of Stephen, was shown to the light, the earth trembled, and an odour, such as that of paradise, was smelt, which instantly cured the various diseases of seventy-three of the assistants. The companions of Stephen were left in their peaceful residence of Caphargamala: but the relics of the first martyr were transported, in solemn procession, to a church constructed in their honour on Mount Sion; and the minute particles of those relics, a drop of blood, or the scrapings of a bone, were acknowledged, in almost every province of the Roman world, to possess a divine and miraculous virtue. The grave and learned Augustin, whose understanding scarcely admits the excuse of credulity, has attested the innumerable prodigies which were performed in Africa by the relics of St Stephen; and this marvellous narrative is inserted in the elaborate work of the City of God, which the bishop of Hippo designed as a so-

lid and immortal proof of the truth of Christianity. Augustin solemnly declares, that he has selected those miracles only which were publicly certified by the persons who were either the objects, or the spectators, of the power of the martyr. Many prodigies were omitted, or forgotten; and Hippo had been less favourably treated than the other cities of the province. And yet the bishop enumerates above seventy miracles, of which three were resurrections from the dead, in the space of two years, and within the limits of his own diocese. If we enlarge our view to all the dioceses, and all the saints, of the Christian world, it will not be easy to calculate the fables and the errors which issued from this inexhaustible source. But we may surely be allowed to observe, that a miracle, in that age of superstition and credulity, lost its name and its merit, since it could scarcely be considered as a deviation from the ordinary and established laws of nature.

III. The innumerable miracles, of which the tombs of the martyrs were the perpetual theatre, revealed to the pious believer the actual state and constitution of the invisible world; and his religious speculations appeared to be founded on the firm basis of fact and experience. Whatever might be the condition of vulgar souls, in the long interval between the dissolution and the resurrection of their bodies, it was evident, that the superior
spirits

spirits of the saints and martyrs did not consume that portion of their existence in silent and inglorious sleep. It was evident (without presuming to determine the place of their habitation, or the nature of their felicity), that they enjoyed the lively and active consciousness of their happiness, their virtue, and their powers; and that they had already secured the possession of their eternal reward. The enlargement of their intellectual faculties surpassed the measure of the human imagination; since it was proved by experience, that they were capable of hearing and understanding the various petitions of their numerous votaries; who, in the same moment of time, but in the most distant parts of the world, invoked the name and assistance of Stephen or of Martin. The confidence of their petitioners was founded on the persuasion, that the saints, who reigned with Christ, cast an eye of pity upon earth; that they were warmly interested in the prosperity of the Catholic church; and that the individuals, who imitated the example of their faith and piety, were the peculiar and favourite objects of their most tender regard. Sometimes, indeed, their friendship might be influenced by considerations of a less exalted kind: they viewed, with partial affection, the places which had been consecrated by their birth, their residence, their death, their burial, or the possession of their relics. The meaner passions

of pride, avarice, and revenge, may be deemed unworthy of a celestial breast; yet the saints themselves condescended to testify their grateful approbation of the liberality of their votaries: and the sharpest bolts of punishment were hurled against those impious wretches who violated their magnificent shrines, or disbelieved their supernatural power. Atrocious, indeed, must have been the guilt, and strange would have been the scepticism, of those men, if they had obstinately resisted the proofs of a divine agency, which the elements, the whole range of the animal creation, and even the subtle and invisible operations of the human mind, were compelled to obey. The immediate, and almost instantaneous, effects, that were supposed to follow the prayer, or the offence, satisfied the Christians, of the ample measure of favour and authority which the saints enjoyed in the presence of the Supreme God; and it seemed almost superfluous to inquire, whether they were continually obliged to intercede before the throne of grace; or whether they might not be permitted to exercise, according to the dictates of their benevolence and justice, the delegated powers of their subordinate ministry. The imagination, which had been raised by a painful effort to the contemplation and worship of the Universal Cause, eagerly embraced such inferior objects of adoration, as were more proportioned to
its

its gross conceptions and imperfect faculties. The sublime and simple theology of the primitive Christians was gradually corrupted; and the monarchy of heaven, already clouded by metaphysical subtleties, was degraded by the introduction of a popular mythology, which tended to restore the reign of polytheism.

IV. As the objects of religion were gradually reduced to the standard of the imagination, the rites and ceremonies were introduced that seemed most powerfully to affect the senses of the vulgar. If, in the beginning of the fifth century, Tertullian, or Lactantius, had been suddenly raised from the dead, to assist at the festival of some popular saint or martyr; they would have gazed with astonishment and indignation on the profane spectacle, which had succeeded to the pure and spiritual worship of a Christian congregation. As soon as the doors of the church were thrown open, they must have been offended by the smoke of incense, the perfume of flowers, and the glare of lamps and tapers, which diffused, at noon-day, a gawdy, superfluous, and, in their opinion, a sacrilegious light. If they approached the balustrade of the altar, they must have made their way through the prostrate crowd, consisting, for the most part, of strangers and pilgrims, who resorted to the city on the vigil of the feast; and who already felt the strong intoxication of fanaticism, and, perhaps, of wine.

Their

Their devout kisses were imprinted on the walls and pavement of the sacred edifice; and their fervent prayers were directed, whatever might be the language of their church, to the bones, the blood, or the ashes of the saint, which were usually concealed, by a linen or silken veil, from the eyes of the vulgar. The Christians frequented the tombs of the martyrs, in the hope of obtaining, from their powerful intercession, every sort of spiritual, but more especially of temporal, blessings. They implored the preservation of their health, or the cure of their infirmities; the fruitfulness of their barren wives, or the safety and happiness of their children. Whenever they undertook any distant or dangerous journey, they requested, that the holy martyrs would be their guides and protectors on the road; and if they returned without having experienced any misfortune, they again hastened to the tombs of the martyrs, to celebrate, with grateful thanksgivings, their obligations to the memory and relics of those heavenly patrons. The walls were hung round with symbols of the favours which they had received; eyes, and hands, and feet, of gold and silver: and edifying pictures, which could not long escape the abuse of indiscreet or idolatrous devotion, represented the image, the attributes, and the miracles of the tutelary saint. The same uniform original spirit of superstition might suggest, in the most distant
ages

ages and countries, the same methods of deceiving the credulity, and of affecting the senses, of mankind: but it must ingenuously be confessed, that the ministers of the Catholic church imitated the profane model which they were impatient to destroy. The most respectable bishops had persuaded themselves, that the ignorant rustics would more cheerfully renounce the superstitions of Paganism, if they found some resemblance, some compensation, in the bosom of Christianity. The religion of Constantine achieved, in less than a century, the final conquest of the Roman empire: but the victors themselves were insensibly subdued by the arts of their vanquished rivals.

GIBBON.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

AT the time when the worship of one Supreme God universally prevailed in Asia, in Europe, and Africa, among all who made a due use of their reason, it was that the Christian religion received its birth.

Platonism greatly promoted the understanding of its dogmas. The Logos, which in Plato signifies *the Wisdom*, the Reason of the Supreme Being, with us made the Word, and the second person of the Deity. Thus religion was wrapped up in metaphysics, to human reason unfathomable!

How

How Mary was afterwards declared mother of God; how the consubstantiality of the Father and the Word was established, together with the procession of the Pneuma, the divine organ of the divine Logos; two natures and two wills resulting from the Hypostasis; and lastly, the Superior Manducation, in which both soul and body are fed with the members of the Incarnate God, worshipped and eaten in the form of bread, present to the sight, felt by the taste, and yet annihilated; these things we shall not repeat here. All mysteries have ever been sublime.

So early as the second century, the expulsion of devils was performed by pronouncing the name of Jesus; whereas before, the name of Jehovah, or Yhaha, was made use of in such miracles: for St Matthew relates, that Jesus's enemies having spread abroad that it was by the name of the prince of the devils that he cast out the devils, he made them this answer: "If I cast out devils by Beelzebub, by whom do your children cast them out?"

At what time the Jews acknowledged Beelzebub, a foreign deity, to be prince of the devils, is not known: but we know and learn it from Josephus, that at Jerusalem there were exorcists, whose immediate province it was to dislodge the devils from the bodies of the possessed; that is, men labouring under uncommon distempers; which, in those

those times, a great part of the world attributed to malignant genii.

Thus the demoniacs were relieved by the true pronounciation of the word Jehovah, now lost, together with other ceremonies at present buried in oblivion.

Exorcisms by Jehovah, or other of God's names, continued to be practised even in the early ages of the church. Origen against Celsus, N^o 262. says, "If, when invoking God, or swearing by him, he is termed the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, certain things will be done by those names, such being their nature and force, that devils are subject to those who utter them; whereas, if called by any other appellation, as God of the tumultuous sea, or the destroyer, no effect follows. The word *Israel* translated into Greek will do nothing; but on pronouncing it in Hebrew, along with the other requisite words, the magical operation will take place."

The same Origen, N^o 19. has these remarkable words: "There are names of a natural virtue, as those used by the Wise Men in Egypt, the Magi in Persia, and the Brachmans in India. Magic, as it is called, is no vain and chimerical art, as the Stoics and Epicureans pretend; neither were the names of Sabbaoth or Adonai made for created beings, but appertain to a mysterious theology concerning the Creator; hence

“hence comes the virtue of these names, when
“placed in order, and pronounced according to
“the rules,” &c.

Origen, in speaking thus, only relates what was universally believed, and does not deliver his own private opinion. All the religions then known admitted a kind of magic, and with two distinctions, the celestial and infernal magic, necromancy, and theurgy; every nation had its prodigies, divinations, and oracles. The Persians did not deny the Egyptian miracles, nor the Egyptians offer to discredit the Persians. God was pleased to wink at the first Christians espousing the Sybilline oracles, and some other inconsequential errors, as not corrupting the essentials of religion.

Another very remarkable circumstance is, that the Christians of the two first centuries abhorred temples, altars, and images. This Origen owns, N^o 374; but on the church's being modelled into a settled form, its discipline and every thing became altered.

When once a religion comes to be established by law, the magistrates are very vigilant in suppressing most of the things which used to be done by the professors of that religion before it was publicly received. The founders held their private meetings, though forbidden under penalties; now none but public assemblies held under the eye of the law are permitted, and all clandestine
2 associations

affociations made punishable. The old maxim was, It is better to obey God than man; now the opposite maxim comes into vogue. To obey God, is to conform to the laws of the land. All places rung with obsessions and possessions, the devil was let loose upon earth; now the devil does not stir out of his den. Prodigies and predictions were necessary then; now a stop is put to them, and they are exploded: he who should openly take upon him to foretel any public calamity, would soon be shown the way to Bedlam. The founders took money underhand from the believers; whereas a man collecting money to dispose of it as he pleases, without any legal warrant, would be taken to task. Thus the whole of the scaffolding used in the construction of the building is taken away.

Next to our holy religion, (to be sure the only good religion), which would be the least bad?

Would it not be the most simple? would it not be that which taught a great deal of morality and few doctrines; that which tended to make men virtuous without making them fools; that which did not impose the belief of things impossible, contradictory, injurious to the Deity, and pernicious to mankind; and which did not take on itself to threaten with eternal punishments all who had common sense? would it not be that which did not support its articles by executioners, and

deluge the earth with blood for unintelligible sophisms? that in which a quibble, a pun, and two or three supposititious maps, would not suffice to make a priest a sovereign and a god, though noted for the most profligate morals and execrable practices? that which did not make kings subject to this priest? would it not be that which taught only the adoration of one God, justice, forbearance, and humanity!

The religion of the Gentiles is said to be absurd in several points, contradictory, and pernicious. But have not its evils and follies been greatly exaggerated? Jupiter's carrying on his amours in the shape of a swan, a bull, with other such doings of the Pagan deities, is certainly the height of ridicule; but let any one, throughout all antiquity, show me a temple dedicated to Leda lying with a swan or a bull. Did Athens or Rome ever hear a sermon to encourage girls to copulate with the swans in their court-yards? Did the collection of fables, so beautifully embellished by Ovid, constitute their religion? are they not like our Golden Legend, or Flower of the Saints? Should some Bramin or Dervise object to us the story of St Mary the Egyptian, who, not having wherewith to pay the sailors who had brought her into Egypt, voluntarily granted to each of them, in lieu of money, what is called *favours*, we should immediately say to the Bramin, You are mistaken,

mistaken, father, the Golden Legend is not our religion.

We taunt the ancients with their prodigies and oracles; but could they return on earth, and were the miracles of our lady of Loretto, and those of our lady of Ephesus, to be numbered, in whose favour would the balance of the account be?

Human sacrifices have been introduced almost among all nations, but very rarely were they practised. Jephtha's daughter, and king Agag, are the only two we meet with among the Jews; for Isaac and Jonathan were not sacrificed. The Grecian story of Iphigenia is not thoroughly verified: human sacrifices are very rarely heard of among the ancient Romans; in a word, very little blood has the Pagan religion shed, and ours has made the earth an *aceldama*. Ours, to be sure, is the only good, the only true religion; but by our abuse of it, we have done so much mischief, that when we speak of other religions it should be with temper and modesty.

If a man would recommend his religion to strangers or his countrymen, should he not go about it with the most winning composure, the most insinuating mildness? If he sets out with saying, that what he declares is demonstrably true, he will meet with strong opposition: and if he takes upon him to tell them that they reject his doctrine, only because it condemns their passions;

that their heart has corrupted their mind; that they have only a false and presumptuous reason; he excites their contempt and resentment, and overthrows what he was for building up.

If the religion which he preaches be true, will passion and insolence add to its truth? Do you storm and rage when you say that men should be mild, patient, benevolent, just, exact in the discharge of all the duties of society? No; here every body is of your mind. Why then such virulent language to your brother, when you are preaching to him metaphysical mysteries? It is because his good sense irritates your self-love. You proudly require that your brother should submit his understanding to yours; and pride disappointed blazes into rage: hence, and hence only, arises your passion. A man who receives ever so many musket-shots in a battle, is never seen to express any anger: but a doctor, at the denial of assent, kindles into implacable fury.

VOLTAIRE.

IDOLATROUS WORSHIP.

Idol comes from the Greek *idos*, a figure, *eidolos*, the representation of a figure, *latreuein*, to serve, to revere, to adore. The word *adore* is originally Latin, and has various meanings; as, to put the hand to the mouth in token of respect,

to

to bend the body, to kneel, to salute, and more commonly to pay a supreme worship.

It is proper to observe here, that the *Trevoux Dictionary* begins this article with saying, that all the Pagans were idolaters, and that the Indians are still so. First, nobody was called *Pagan* before the time of Theodosius the younger, when that appellation was given to the inhabitants of the country towns of Italy, *Pagorum Incolæ Pagani*, who retained their ancient religion. Secondly, Indostan is entirely Mahometan, and the Mahometans are implacable enemies to images and idolatry. Thirdly, many people of India, who are of the ancient religion of the Parsees, a certain tribe which admit of no idols, cannot with any propriety be termed idolaters.

It appears that there never was any people on the earth who took to themselves the name of *idolaters*. It is rather an abusive word, a term of detestation; as the Spaniards formerly used to call the French *Gavaches*, which the French returned by calling the Spaniards *Maranas*. Had the senate of Rome, the Areopagus of Athens, the court of the kings of Persia, been asked, "Are you idolaters?" they would hardly have known what the question meant; at least not one of them would have answered, "We worship idols or images." The word *idolater* or *idolatry*, does not occur either in Homer, Hesiod, Herodotus, or any

Gentile author. Never was there any edict or law ordering idols to be worshipped, to be accounted as deities, or to be considered as such.

The Roman and Carthaginian generals at the making a treaty, called all their gods to witness; it is in their presence, say they, that we swear to this peace. Now the statues of all these gods, their number being none of the smallest, were not in the general's tent: but they held the gods to be, as it were, present at the actions of men, as witnesses and as judges; and certainly it was not the image which made the deity.

In what light did they then look on the statues of their false deities which stood in the temples? In the same light, if I may be allowed the expression, as we view the images of the objects of our veneration. Their error was not the worshipping a piece of wood or marble, but the worshipping a false deity represented by the wood and marble. The difference between them and us is not that they had images and we had none; but that their images represented imaginary beings, and in a false religion; whereas ours represent real beings, and in a true religion. The Greeks had the statue of Hercules, and we that of St Christopher; they had Esculapius and his goat, and we St Roch and his dog; they had Jupiter with his thunder-bolts, and we St Anthony of Padua, and St James of Compostella.

When

When the Consul Pliny, in the exordium of his panegyric on Trajan, addresses his petitions to the immortal gods, he cannot be thought to mean the images, which were far from being immortal.

Neither in the latter nor the most remote times of Paganism one single fact occurs to conclude that they worshipped idols. Homer mentions only gods dwelling in lofty Olympus. The Palladium, though it fell from heaven, was no more than a sacred pledge of Pallas's protection; it was the goddess herself who was revered in the Palladium.

But the Romans and Greeks kneeled down before statues, put crowns on them, decked them with flowers, burnt incense to them, and carried them in solemn state through public places. These usages we have consecrated in our religion, and yet we are not idolaters.

In times of drought, the women, after keeping a fast, carried forth the statues of the gods in public, walking bare-footed, with their hair loose; and immediately, according to Petronius, the rain would pour down by pailfuls; *Statim urceatim pluebat*. Have we not adopted this rite, which, though an abomination among the Gentiles, is doubtless genuine devotion with Catholics? How common is it among us to carry bare-footed the shrines of saints, in order to obtain a blessing from Heaven by their intercession? A Turk, a lettered Chinese,

Chinese, at seeing those ceremonies, might, from his ignorance, accuse us of placing our confidence in the images which we thus carry about in procession; but a word or two would undeceive him.

We are surpris'd at the prodigious number of declamations thundered out in all ages against the idolatry of the Romans and Greeks; and afterwards, our surprise is still greater at finding that they were not idolaters.

Some temples were more privileged than others. The great Diana of Ephesus stood in higher fame than a village Diana; more miracles were performed in the temple of Esculapius at Epidaurus, than in any other of his temples. More offerings were made to the statue of Jupiter the Olympian, than to that of the Paphlagonian Jupiter. But since it is proper always to contrast the usages of a true religion to those of a false worship, have not some of our altars, for ages past, been more frequented than others? What are the offerings to our Lady *des Neiges*, in comparison of those made to our Lady of Loretto? It is our business to examine, whether this affords a just pretence for charging us with idolatry.

The original invention was only one Diana, one Apollo, and one Esculapius; not as many Dianas, Apollos, and Esculapiuses, as they had temples and statues. Thus it is evidenced, as far as

a point of history can be, that the ancients did not hold a statue to be a deity; that the worship could not relate to the statue or idol; and consequently that the ancients were not idolaters.

A rude superstitious populace, incapable of reflection, either to doubt, or deny, or believe, who flocked to the temples, as having nothing else to do, and because the little are there on a level with the great, who carried their offerings merely out of custom, who were continually talking of miracles, without having ever examined any one, and who were very little above the victims they brought; such a populace, I say, might, at the sight of the great Diana, and the thundering Jupiter, be struck with a religious horror; and, without knowing it, worship the statue itself. This is no more than what has been the case of our ignorant peasants; and care is accordingly taken to give them to understand, that it is the blessed in heaven they are to invoke for their intercession, and not figures of wood and stone, and that their worship is due to God.

The Greeks and the Romans increased the number of their deities by apotheoses; the Greeks deified illustrious conquerors, as Bacchus, Hercules, and Perseus; Rome raised altars to its emperors. Of a very different kind are our apotheoses; if we have saints answerable to their demigods and secondary gods, it is without any regard to

to rank or conquests. We have erected temples to men, merely for their exemplary virtues, and most of whom would not have been known on earth, had they not been placed in heaven. The apotheoses of the ancients were acts of adulation; ours of respect to virtue. But these ancient apotheoses are another convincing proof that the Greeks and Romans cannot properly be called idolaters. It is manifest that they no more held a divine virtue residing in the statues of Augustus and Claudius than in their medals.

Cicero, in his philosophical works, does not leave us so much as the least suspicion that any mistake could be committed with regard to the statues of the gods, so as to confound them with the deities themselves. His speakers inveigh with great asrimony against the established religion, but not one of them dreams of charging the Romans with mistaking marble and brass for deities.

Lucretius, who never gives any quarter to the superstitious, reproaches no body with this folly: I must therefore again say it, this opinion never existed, never was thought of; and never was there any such thing as idolaters.

Horace introduces a statue of Priapus, saying:

*Olim truncus eram ficulnus, inutile lignum,
Cum faber incertus scammum, faceretne Priapum,
Maluit esse Deum.*

What is to be inferred from this passage? Priapus

pus was one of those petty deities which were given up to the sarcasms of the jocular; and this very joke is as strong a proof as can be, that the figure of Priapus was not greatly revered, being made a scarecrow.

Dacier, commentator-like, has taken care to observe, that Baruch had foretold this business; saying, They shall be whatever the artist pleases. But he might withal have remarked, that the like might be said of all the statues that ever existed.

A tub may be made out of a block of marble, as well as the statue of Alexander or Jupiter, or something still more respectable. The matter of which were formed the cherubims of the Holy of Holies, might have equally served for the meanest purposes. A throne or an altar lose nothing of the reverence due to them, because the artist might have formed them into a kitchen table.

Dacier, instead of inferring that the Romans worshipped Priapus's image, and that Baruch had predicted it, ought rather to have concluded that the Romans made a jest of it. Look into all the authors who speak of the statues of their gods, not one shall you find mentioning idolatry, but quite the contrary. You read in Martial,

*Qui finxit sacros auro vel marmore vultus,
Non facit ille Deos.*

In

In Ovid, *Colitur pro Jove forma Jovis.*

In Statius, *Nulla autem effigies nulli commissa metallo,
Forma Dei mentes habitare ac numina gaudet.*

In Lucan, *Estne Dei sedes, nisi terra et pontus et ær.*

To enumerate all the passages in confirmation that images were accounted images would take up a volume.

The only case which could favour an opinion that images had any thing divine in them, was the oracular images: but certainly the current opinion was, that the gods had chosen some particular altars and particular statues, where they sometimes condescended to reside, giving audience to men, and answering them. In Homer, and the choruses of Greek tragedies, we only meet with prayers addressed to Apollo himself, as delivering his oracles on such a mount, in such a temple, or such a city. All antiquity throughout has left no vestige of supplications made to a statue.

They who professed magic, who believed it to be a science, or who feigned to believe it, pretended to be possessed of the secret of bringing down the gods into statues; but not the great gods, only the secondary, the genii. This Mercurius Trismegistus used to term *making deities*, and it

is refuted by St Augustin in his City of God. But this very thing evidently shows the images to have had nothing divine in them, as not animated without the art of a magician. And I fancy few magicians were found so dexterous as to animate a statue so as to make it speak.

In a word, the images of the gods were not gods; it was Jupiter, and not his image, which hurled the thunderbolt; it was not the statue of Neptune which agitated the sea, nor that of Apollo which diffused light. The Greeks and Romans were Gentiles, Polytheists, but by no means idolaters.

VOLTAIRE.

ON THE SAME SUBJECT.

TO call those nations who worshipped the sun and stars *idolaters*, is wronging them. For a long time neither images nor temples were known among them: if they were mistaken, it was in paying to the heavenly bodies the homage due only to the Creator. Besides, the doctrine of Zoroaster or Zerdust, as preserved in the Sadder, teaches the existence of a Supreme Being, who punisheth and rewardeth. Now this is very far from idolatry. The Chinese government never admitted idols, constantly adhering to the simple worship of King-tien, the master of heaven. Gen-giskan, among the Tartars, cannot be charged

with idolatry, never having had any such thing as images. The Mussulmen of Greece, Asia Minor, Syria, Persia, India, and Africa, call the Christians idolaters, *giaours*; imagining that the Christians worship images. Several images which they found at Constantinople in St Sophia, and in the church of the Holy Apostles, and others, they broke to pieces, converting the churches into mosques. Appearances, as usual, deceived them, and led them to believe that the dedicating of temples to saints who had formerly been men, the worshipping of their images with genuflexion, and the performing of miracles in those temples, were undeniable proofs of the most arrant idolatry; yet the furthest from it in the world. The Christians in reality worship only one God, and in the blessed themselves revere only the virtue of God acting in his saints. The Iconoclasts and the Protestants have brought the same charge of idolatry against the church of Rome, and the same answer has been given them.

Men having very seldom precise ideas, and still more seldom expressing their ideas in precise words, clear of all ambiguity, the name of *idolaters* was given to the Gentiles, and especially the Polytheists. Immense volumes have been written, according to the multitude of varying sentiments, on the origin of worshipping God, or several gods, and under sensible representations.

Now

Now this multitude of books and opinions only proves the ignorance of the authors.

We know not who invented any part of our clothing, and yet we would fain know who was the first inventor of idols. What signifies a passage of Sanchoniathon, who lived before the Trojan war? What information does he give us, in saying that the *chaos*, the *mind*, that is, the *breath*, being enamoured with its principles, extracted the mud from them: that he made the air luminous: that the wind Colp and his wife Bau begot Eon, and he begot Genos; that Cronos their descendant had two eyes behind as before; that he came to be god, and gave Egypt to his son Jaut? This is one of the most respectable monuments of antiquity.

Orpheus, who was prior to Sanchoniathon, gives us just as much light in his *Theogonia*, which Damascius has preserved. He represents the mundane principle in the form of a dragon with two heads, one of a bull, and the other of a lion, with a face in the middle, which he terms *god face*, and gilded wings to the shoulders.

Yet these ideas, fantastical as they are, give us an insight into two important truths; one that sensible images and hieroglyphics are derived from the most remote antiquity; the other, that all ancient philosophers acknowledged a primordial principle.

As to polytheism, common sense will tell you, that at the commencement of mankind, that is, of weak creatures, susceptible of reason and folly, subject to every accident, to sickness and death, they soon came to a sense of their weakness and dependence; they easily conceived that there was something superior to themselves; they felt a power in the earth which produced their food, another in the air which often destroyed them, and another in the consuming fire and the submerging water. What could be more natural in men absolutely ignorant, than to fancy that there were beings which presided over those elements? What could be more natural than to revere the invisible power which made the sun and stars to shine? And on proceeding to form an idea of these superior powers, what was again more natural than to represent them in a sensitive way? Or I may even say, how could they go about it otherwise? Judaism, anterior to our religion, and prescribed by God himself, was full of those images under which the Deity is represented. He condescends to speak the language of men in a bush; he makes his appearance on a mountain; the heavenly spirits sent by him all come in a human shape: in a word, the sanctuary itself is filled with cherubims, human bodies, and the wings and heads of beasts. This led Plutarch, Tacitus, and Appian, and so many others, into the ridiculous mistake

take of upbraiding the Jews with worshipping an ass's head. Thus God, who had forbidden the painting and carving of any figure, has been pleased nevertheless to accommodate himself to human weakness, which requires the senses to be spoken to by images.

Isaiah, chap. vi. sees the Lord seated on a throne, and his train fill the temple: In chap. i. of *Jeremiah*, the Lord stretches out his hand and touches the prophet's mouth: *Ezekiel*, chap. iii. sees a throne of sapphire, and God appears to him like a man seated on that throne. This imagery does not in the least defile the purity of the Jewish religion, which never made use of pictures, statues, and idols, as public representations of the Deity.

The lettered Chinese, the Persians, the ancient Egyptians, had no idols: but Isis and Osiris were soon represented in figures; Bell at Babylon was as soon exhibited in a huge Colossus; Brama was in the Indian peninsula a hideous kind of monster. The Greeks above all multiplied the names of the deities, and of course the statues and temples; but ever attributing the supreme power to their Zeus, by the Latins named *Jupiter*, the sovereign of gods and men. The Romans imitated the Greeks; both always place their gods in heaven, without knowing what they meant by heaven and their Olympus; these supe-

rior beings could not be supposed to reside in the clouds, which are only water. At first seven of them were placed in the seven planets, among which was reckoned the sun; but afterwards the residence of all the gods was extended to the whole heavenly expanse.

The Romans had twelve great deities, six male and six female, whom they distinguished by the appellation of *Diimajorum gentium*, Jupiter, Neptune, Apollo, Vulcan, Mars, Mercury: Juno, Vesta, Minerva, Ceres, Venus, Diana. Pluto was then omitted, and Vesta took his place.

Next were the gods *minorum gentium*, the indigetes or heroes, as Bacchus, Hercules, Esculapius; and the infernal deities, Pluto, Proserpine; the sea gods, as Thetis, Amphitrite; the Nereides, and Glaucus; afterwards the Dryades, the Naiades; the gods of gardens; the pastoral deities: every profession, every action of life, children, maidens, wives, women in childbed, all had their deity: there was even the god *Fart*. Lastly, emperors were deified; not that these emperors, nor the god *Fart*, nor the goddesses *Pertunda*, nor *Priapus*, nor *Rumila* the goddesses of Bubbies, nor *Stercutius* the god of genital parts, were accounted the lords of heaven and earth. Some of the emperors indeed had temples; the petty household-gods went without them; but all had their images or their idols.

These

These were little grotesque figures, set up in a closet by way of ornament; old women and children were highly delighted with them: but never were these figures authorised by any public worship; every one was left to follow his own private superstition. These little idols are still found in the ruins of ancient cities.

Though we cannot fix the precise time when men began to make idols, they are, however, known to belong to the most remote antiquity. Terah, Abraham's father, used to make them at Ur in Chaldea. Rachel purloined and carried off Laban's idols. There is no going higher.

But what did the ancient nations think of all those images? what virtue, what power did they attribute to them! Was it thought that the gods quitted heaven to come down and hide themselves in their statues? or that they imparted to them a portion of the divine spirit, or did not impart any thing at all to them? A great deal of useless erudition has been thrown away on this point, it being evident that every one's notions of them were proportioned to his reason, his credulity, or fanaticism. The priests, we may be sure, would not be wanting to annex to their statues all the divinity they possibly could, in order to draw the more offerings. The philosophers, it is well known, censured these superstitions; the military people made a jest of them; and the commonality, ever
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ignorant and silly, knew not what they were doing. This is, in a few words, the history of all the nations to whom God has not made himself known.

The premises are applicable to the worship universally paid in Egypt to an ox, and in several cities to a dog, a monkey, a cat, and onions. In all appearance they were at first only emblems. Afterwards a certain ox called *Apis*, a certain dog named *Anubis*, were worshipped; still the people went on eating beef and onions; but what the Egyptian old women thought of sacred onions and oxen is not cleared up.

It was not uncommon for idols to speak. On the anniversary of Cybele's festival, the city of Rome commemorated the beautiful distich uttered by the statue on its removal from King Attalus's palace.

Ipsa pati volui, ne sit mora, mitte volentem;

Dignus Roma locus, quo Deus omnis eat.

"I allowed myself to be carried off: Away with me quickly. Rome is worthy to be the residence of every deity."

The statue of Fortune had spoke: the Scipios, the Ciceros, and Cæsars, indeed, believed nothing of the matter; but the old women, to whom En-colpus gave a crown to buy geese and gods, might very well believe it.

The idols likewise pronounced oracles, the priests

priests concealed within the statues speaking in the name of the Deity.

Amidst so many gods, so many different theogonies and separate worships, whence is it that no such thing as a religious war was ever known among the people called *idolaters*? This tranquillity was a good springing from an evil, from error itself; for every nation owning several inferior gods, peaceably allowed its neighbours to have theirs likewise. Except Cambyse's killing the ox Apis, not one instance is to be found in all profane history of a conqueror offering any insult to the gods of a vanquished nation. The Gentiles had no exclusive religion; and all the priests minded, was to multiply offerings and sacrifices.

The first offerings were the fruits of the earth; but the priests soon came to want animal food for their table: with their own hands they slew the victims; and as they made themselves butchers, they became sanguinary. At length they introduced the horrible practice of offering human victims, and especially comely boys and girls, abominations never known among the Chinese, the Persis, or the Indians. But at Hieropolus in Egypt, Porphyry tells us it was nothing extraordinary to sacrifice men.

In Tauris strangers were sacrificed; but this savage custom being known, the priests of Tauris,
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it is to be supposed, did not much business. This execrable superstition prevailed among the most ancient Greeks, the Cypriots, the Phenicians, the Tyrians, and the Carthaginians. The Romans themselves gave into this religious guilt; and, according to Plutarch, sacrificed two Greeks and two Gauls, to expiate the incontinency of three vestals. Procopius, who was contemporary with Theodobert King of the Franks, says that the Franks sacrificed men on their entrance into Italy under that prince. These horrid sacrifices were common among the Gauls and Germans. There is no reading history without being very much displeased with one's own species.

What if, among the Jews, Jephtha sacrificed his daughter, and Saul was going to slay his son? What if they who were devoted to the Lord by anathema could not be redeemed, as beasts were redeemed, but were indispensably put to death? What though Samuel, a Jewish priest, cut to pieces with a consecrated cleaver King Agag prisoner of war whom Saul had spared, and sharply reproved Saul for having treated that king according to the laws of nations? What of all this? God is the sovereign of mankind, and may take away their lives when he will, as he will, and by whom he will: but men are not to put themselves on a footing with the Lord of Life and Death,

Death, and usurp the prerogatives of the Supreme Being.

Amidst such detestable proceedings, it is some relief to the feeling heart to know, that in almost all those nations called *idolatrours*, there was the sacred theology and popular error, private worship and public ceremonies; the religion of the wise, and that of the vulgar. To those who were initiated in the mysteries, the existence of one only God was preached. Of this a sufficient testimony is the hymn attributed to the elder Orpheus, which was sung in the celebrated mysteries of Ceres Eleusina; "Contemplate the Divine
" nature, illumine thy mind, govern thy heart, walk
" in the path of justice, take care that the God
" of heaven be before thine eyes: there is none
" but him; he alone is self-existent; all beings
" derive their existence from him; he upholds
" them all; never has he been seen by mortals;
" and he sees all things."

The following passage of the philosopher Maximus of Madaura, in his Letter to St Augustine, is likewise worth attention: "What man is so
" dull, so stupid, as to question the existence of
" an eternal, a supreme, infinite Deity, who has
" created nothing like himself, and is the com-
" mon Father of all things!"

A thousand monuments might be produced, that

that wise men in all times abhorred both idolatry and Polytheism.

Epietetus, that pattern of resignation and patience, so great in so mean a condition, never speaks but of one only God. One of his maxims is this, "God has created me, God is within me; I carry him about every where. Shall I defile him with obscene thoughts, unjust actions, or infamous desires? My duty is to thank God for every thing, to praise him for every thing; and to thank, praise, and serve him continually, whilst I have life." All Epietetus's ideas turn on this principle.

Marcus Aurelius, who perhaps was on the throne of the Roman empire not less great than Epietetus in servitude, does indeed often mention gods, in conformity to the current phraseology, or to express intermediate beings between the Supreme Essence and men; but in how many passages does he show, that in reality he acknowledges only one eternal infinite God? "Our souls," says he, "are an emanation of the Deity; my body, my spirits, proceed from God."

The Stoics, the Platonists, held one Divine and Universal Nature; the Epicureans denied it. The priests, in their mysteries, spoke only of one God. Where, then, were the idolaters?

Besides, it is one of the great mistakes in Mo-

rer's Dictionary, to say, that in the time of Theodosius the Younger, no idolaters remained but in the remote parts of Asia and Africa. There were still, and even down to the seventh century, many Gentile nations in Italy. All Germany north of the Weser were strangers to Christianity in Charlemagne's time; and long after him Poland, and the whole North, continued in what is called *idolatry*. Half Africa, all the realms beyond the Ganges, Japan, the innumerable commonality of China, a hundred Tartarian hords, retain their ancient worship; whereas in Europe this religion is to be found only among some Laplanders, Samoides, and Tartars. To conclude, in the time which we distinguish by the appellation of the Middle Age, the Mahometans were called Pagans: a people who execrate images were branded as idolaters and image-worshippers; and it must be frankly owned, that the Turks, seeing our churches crowded with images and statues, are more excusable in calling us idolaters.

VOLTAIRE.

SUPERSTITIOUS WORSHIP.

WHATEVER goes beyond the adoration of one Supreme Being, and a submission of the heart to his eternal orders, is generally superstition; and a

most dangerous superstition is the annexion of the pardon of crimes to certain ceremonies.

*Et nigras mactant pecudes, et manibus divi
Inferias mittunt.*

*O faciles nimium qui tristia crimina cedis
Fluminea tolli posse putatis aqua!*

“ You imagine that God will forget your having killed a man, only for your washing yourself in a river, sacrificing a black sheep, and some words being said over you.” Of course, then, a second murder will be forgiven you at the same easy rate, and so a third; and a hundred murders will only cost you a hundred black sheep, and a hundred ablutions! Poor mortals! away with such conceits; the best way is, commit no murder, and to save your black sheep.

How scandalous is it to imagine that a priest of Isis and Cybele can reconcile you to the Deity, by playing on cymbals and castanets! And what is this priest of Cybele, this vagrant gelding, who lives by your weakness, that he shall set up to be as a mediator between heaven and you? Has he any commission from God? He takes money from you only for muttering some strange words; and can you think that the Being of beings ratifies what this hypocrite says?

Some superstitions are innocent; you dance on Diana or Pomona's festivals, or those of any of

the secondary gods in your calendar: be it so; dancing is pleasant, healthy, and exhilarating; it hurts nobody: but do not take it into your head that Pomona and Vertumnus are mightily pleased at your having frolicked in honour of them; and that, should you fail to do so, they would make you smart for it. The gardener's spade and hoe are the only Pomona and Vertumnus. Do not be so weak as to think that your garden will be destroyed by a tempest if you omit dancing the Pyrrhic or the Cordax.

There is another superstition which perhaps is excusable, and even an incentive to virtue; I mean, deifying great men who have been signal benefactors to their own species. To be sure it would be better only to look on them as venerable personages, and especially to endeavour to imitate them: therefore revere, without worshipping, a Solon, a Thales, a Pythagoras; but by no means pay thy adorations to Hercules for having cleansed Augeas's stables, and lying with fifty girls in one night.

Especially forbear setting up a worship for wretches without any other merit than ignorance, enthusiasm, and nastiness; who made a vow of idleness and beggary, and gloried in such infamy: fit subjects indeed for deification after their death, who were never known to do the least good when living!

Observe that the most superstitious times have ever been noted for the greatest enormities.

VOLTAIRE.

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FANATICAL ZEAL.

FANATIC zeal is to superstition what a delirium is to a fever, and fury to anger: he who has ecstasies and visions, who takes dreams for realities, and his imaginations for prophecies, is an enthusiast; and he who sticks not at supporting his folly by murder, is a fanatic. Bartholomew Diaz, a fugitive at Nuremberg, who was firmly convinced that the pope is the Antichrist in the Revelations, and that he has the mark of the beast, was only an enthusiast; whereas his brother, who set out for Rome with the godly intention of murdering him, and who actually did murder him for God's sake, was one of

of the most execrable fanatics that superstition could form.

Polieuctes, who, on a Pagan festival, went into the temple, pulling down and breaking the images and other ornaments, showed himself a fanatic, less horrible, indeed, than Diaz, but equally rash and imprudent. The murderers of Francis duke of Guise, of William prince of Orange, of the kings Henry III. and Henry IV. and of so many others, were demoniacs, agitated by the same evil spirit as Diaz.

The most detestable instance of fanatic zeal is that of the citizens of Paris, who on the feast of St Bartholomew could massacre their fellow-citizens for not going to mass.

Some are fanatics in cool blood: these are the judges who can sentence people to death without any other guilt than for not being of their way of thinking: these judges are the more guilty, and the more deserving of universal execration, as not being under a fit of rage like the Clements, the Chatels, the Ravailacs, the Gerards, the Damiens. One would think they might listen to reason.

When once this kind of zeal has touched the brain, the distemper is desperate. I have seen Convulsionists, who, in speaking of the miracles of St Paris, grew hot involuntarily; their eyes glared, they trembled in all their limbs, their countenance

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was quite disfigured with rancour, and they unquestionably would have killed any one who had contradicted them.

As to our holy religion having been so often corrupted by these infernal impulses, it is the folly of men that is to be blamed.

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